

REVELATIONS
OF LOUISE



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BY
ALBERT S. CROCKETT

*WITH TWO BLACK-AND-WHITE ILLUSTRATIONS
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS*



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TO HER
WHOSE SORROWS I HAVE SHARED
AND WHOSE HAPPINESS
MAKES MINE

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A RECORD OF FACT

IN the days between the publication of the false report and the actual signing of the Armistice, I had come home from Washington to wait—the second journey up from the Capital during the week. The other had been occasioned by a telegram from Denver telling us that the daughter we loved, and of whom had just come hopeful reports, had small chance; that if we wished her to see home again we had better come for her immediately.

Her mother went. Duties called me back to Washington, but on Saturday I came home again to get word to open the house in the country, so much loved by her and by us all, for her reception. I did not leave home all day. News was due before noon, and as that passed and the afternoon wore on and no message came, I sensed the blow that was coming. When I returned to the apartment from a hurried dinner, a telegram lay inside the door. The end had come within a few hours after the reunion of mother and daughter.

Naturally my own sorrow could not compare with a mother's. True, I was "Daddy" though, after all, I was only a step-father, though she was as my own child. But the attachment between her mother and Louise was of unusual strength. The former lived in her daughter and Louise worshiped her mother. They seemed like girls of the same age. Our only son had been in France for more than a year and the shock

of the news of his being wounded near Château Thierry, and the suspense while waiting for details had been almost too much for a woman whose heart had been worn by nearly three years of anxiety and dread. What could be done to help her in this fresh, soul-crushing woe? Neither of us knew the consolation which some might find in religion, and her burden seemed greater than a frail woman could bear.

Those days seem long past and unreal. And so much has come into our lives that is strange—even startling—so much that is joy-giving and inspiring, that we feel we must tell the story. Our hope is that those who have loved and have seen their heart's treasure go beyond may gain comfort from the story of Louise; that they may find solace that comes from the assurance that their beloved dead still live, are with them constantly, share their joys, strive to lighten their sorrows, *and are trying to communicate with them*. If we shall succeed only in sowing seeds of comfort, we shall feel we have done well and fulfilled the obligation that Louise has laid upon us to tell what we have been told about the Life that Endures.

One who takes up this book with the thought of finding anything in the nature of a scientific investigation will be disappointed. Cold Science undoubtedly has its place, and justly so, as an investigator, analyst, judge of values and recorder of progress. But we did not start out to make discoveries; and accident, or the design of some power or force outside ourselves, must be credited or blamed—for there will be blame—if we shall add anything to what is known or believed of psychical phenomena. We have not communicated our story to any Psychical Society, for our sole purpose until long after we had begun to have

experiences in which no accredited "medium" took part, was merely the selfish seeking after that which might soothe the aching of our own hearts rather than to find something that might serve others. While my own acquaintance with psychical literature is limited, I have been informed that ours was the only case in America where the major portion of what was heard, seen and otherwise experienced was obtained through the accidental employment of one who had not the slightest idea she was a medium—a child just turning thirteen, and to whom could not be attached an iota of the charge commonly made against professional mediums, that she hypnotized us or tricked us into seeing and hearing things because that was the way she made her living!

However, even the accredited investigator in matters psychical finds an incredulous public. Men whose literary and scientific attainments have built up great reputations have succeeded in carrying some of the weight of their names into spiritualistic discussions and argument; but with the great public, after all, those reputations have served to attract curiosity and sell books and magazines, rather than to convince. What coldness and suspicion must await the novice who seeks to tell, not of experiments, but of what he knows to be facts and happenings, when those same facts and happenings are contrary to what most people believe to be humanly or otherwise possible!

For he who sponsors this narrative frankly admits that his name, as such, carries no weight. Practically all his journalistic experience was acquired in anonymous schools—as they were in his time—the old *Philadelphia Times*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the *New York Herald*, the *New York Sun* and the *New York*

Times—and except in the case of fugitive contributions to periodicals, his name has never appeared as the author of anything. But he feels that there are circumstances that might support his claim to being a truthful person and a credible witness.

Eight years as a school teacher, sixteen years as a newspaper reporter and correspondent in many countries, two years in publicity work and almost two years in the Government service might ordinarily be considered training that should open a man's eyes to the frailties of human nature, and teach him never to accept phenomena at their face value. A long experience in assisting to expose frauds should serve to make such a one at least skeptical. I have no hesitation in asserting that nobody under whom I have worked in any capacity has ever had reason to question my truthfulness or honesty, and while that fact is no guarantee that I have not since become mentally or morally perverted, an impartial jury would attach a certain value to such testimony. And—though this may be beside the mark—the comments of magazine editors, or their lack of comment, upon a procession of what I fondly thought were children of my fancy that during long years pilgrimaged about, invariably finding their only insurance against the waste-basket in the return postage I had providently enclosed, convinced me that I could not turn out fiction. And so, matters of imagination and style I must leave to those skilled in their use, and I shall have to trust to a plain recording of fact, such as has always been my habit in writing for newspapers.

But I believe I can assert without fear of successful contradiction that nobody ever approached the unknown with a more insistent demand for proof; and doubt

lingered until finally I was furnished with actual manifestations of power I believe to be extra-human and beyond what we ordinarily think of as natural, and which satisfied my vision, my sense of touch, and my reason.

In the light of what we have been told by a method I consider reasonably orderly, as well as consecutive and culminative, I believe that Love is the great tie that binds us individually to those gone beyond. I am convinced that the yearning of those who have broken the earth-tie to communicate with those dear to them in this life, and the longing of those left behind to know that ashes are not all that is left of their beloved, that somewhere out there these still live; whether they are happy, and whether, in these days when so many "impossible" things come to pass, it is not possible to get just a word of reassurance and hope, are two great forces that actually make communication possible. It is like the positive and negative electrodes of an electrical device. Join the two, and the current flows.

Investigators such as Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir Conan Doyle have dwelt upon the reasons why just now there seem to be such great possibilities for converse between the spirit plane and ours. During the years of the Great War and since, so many of the young and the vigorous, whose claim upon life was strong, whose affections powerful, have been swept suddenly out of this existence in battle or by plague that the collective force of fresh motive power on the other side assumed tremendous proportions and would not be denied. On the other hand, shock and grief over tragic bereavement, the longing to know what has happened, other than mere death, to beloved chil-

dren, husbands, wives and parents, have registered an extraordinary impression upon the Beyond. Thus we have two impulses of this character stronger than ever before known and they are seeking each other. This is a theory of men of science who inquire into reasons; it is also the belief of humbler individuals who have sought in the hope of finding.

In setting forth this relation, we are not assuming the rôle of apostles of a faith or founders of a creed. To deny that spirits have manifested themselves; that they have talked with men and have appeared to them; that they have entered the bodies of human beings, is to deny the Old Testament as well as the New. The point made by a great many persons of what is termed orthodox faith is that while Moses may have talked directly with God, and Christ have raised Himself from the dead, and Paul have been converted by a voice from Heaven, the day of miracles and manifestations of spirits is long past. As a matter of fact, much of what is called science proceeds upon the assumption that Christ was an egomaniac or a fanatic, if not a myth, and that Christianity itself is opposed to enlightenment; that anything which tends to a belief in the impermanence of everything visible and the permanence of the invisible is a reversion to those Middle Ages when, as certain historians would teach us to believe, the Church locked up learning in the monasteries because it feared to let the layman think for himself. To-day, the average man in business does not want to be troubled by thoughts of a hereafter. The professional man reasons away from it. Science, when it is not inventing fiendish methods for depopulating the world in war, devotes itself to making the earth as attractive as possible and postponing the day

when one need quit it. If you say "psychical" to the average physician, he will immediately take a squint at the pupils of your eyes, and perhaps suggest a rest cure. With the average man the single test applied to the unknown is, "I cannot see, *ergo*, it doesn't exist." The "subconsciousness," itself an attractive and fertile field for investigation, has been shell-holed by the careless, the ignorant, the unthinking and the intolerant into an abysmal dumping-pit, to which is consigned every phenomenon that happens not to square with rules of thumb. And still, the memory of Galileo and Columbus survives!

When I was about half-way through this book, I decided to try an experiment. I wrote to a number of men who have known me for years. Most of them I have worked under or with. I told them I expected to say something in print on a psychical subject, and that, in consequence, my truthfulness and even sanity would probably be questioned. Their testimony that they had known me in the past as a credible witness was flattering from its unanimity. However, in certain replies there was something more than a note of concern. While one man whose private secretary I was during a diplomatic mission to a foreign capital cordially assured me he would give credence to any statement of fact I should make, others warned me against the danger of taking up "ghost-raising" and one advised me against doing anything that might cause doubt as to my sanity and truthfulness. And I believe all these men wrote in a thorough spirit of friendliness. I recall that I myself, when I interviewed my first psychical research exponent, some twenty years ago, went back to the office convinced I had been talking to a crazy man, and I am afraid

that any one who read that interview must have come to the same conclusion.

My greatest encouragement came from one who when he was active in his profession was the best loved of any man that in this generation has been at the head of a great New York newspaper, and who will be immediately identified in almost any newspaper office. His letter said in part:

"I know it will be interesting and trustworthy and valuable, for these are qualities that enter into your productions and utterances of all sorts. . . . You know my years and years of acquaintance with you has made me very much interested in you and in all that you do."

Now it so happens that a saying credited to an ancestor of a collateral branch of my family has been a guiding principle with me. I have been slow to make up my mind to do a thing, but when I have become convinced that it was right, I have "gone ahead." A distinguished literary friend, to whom I appealed for advice, made this suggestion: "Aim at the stars and let her go!" But I am not drawing a bow, even a short one. I believe I have something that should be told; and in all modesty, with due deference to all my fellow scribes, of equal or greater degree, and without apology to those pharisees and hypocrites who believe merely in "making clean the outside of the platter," I am going to tell it. What I shall say can justly offend no one who truly believes in the "Credo" attributed to the Apostles. To some whose faith falters, perhaps conviction may come, as it has in my own case, that all things come from God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth; that the man Jesus Christ was His Son; that Christ,

in spirit, while His body lay in the tomb, went to the place of departed spirits, and afterward ascended into Heaven, where those who earnestly and truly repent of their sins, as well as those who lead blameless lives, shall one day join Him.

While it is my hope in the narrative to avoid deductions as far as possible, there are some things we have been told that I think should be repeated here, even if they are not new, in order to assist comprehension of what shall be recorded.

There are certain persons in this life who possess what may be described as psychical or magnetic power. In some it is latent, in others it is manifest. We have all heard of children who "see things"; as a matter of fact, we to whom happened what I record, have been told that many children are to a certain extent psychic, but that most lose the power, or sense, or whatever it may be, as they grow up. Those in whom the power remains and is developed often become "mediums." I do not mean, necessarily, in a professional sense; the term is used to denote mediums of communication. A prejudice exists against the term "medium," due, no doubt, to the great amount of charlatanry that has been practiced from time immemorial by persons who claim to "raise ghosts." There are many "mediums," but it is difficult to find one practicing who is not a charlatan. The law discourages the genuine from courting publicity.

It was through a medium, one who I happen to know has been recommended by officers of the Society for Psychical Research, that we made our first approach to what, through want of a better term, I must call the super-normal. Through her was begun a chain of communication that grew stronger with

time, until it developed for us surely the most remarkable summer that any small family of quiet folk has ever spent in these times, a summer that started in dreariness and hopeless longing for the lost, and that grew into happiness and a measure of content. For a message she transmitted gave my wife her first knowledge of the existence of a dreary little orphan and made possible the beginning of a new and joyous chapter in the child's life; as we thus learned that my wife's first husband had left a child, and that this child had had a very hard lot, and it was upon information so given that we were helped in locating her. She came to visit us for the summer, and it was with her aid that much of what will be recorded has happened. A little girl just rounding out her thirteenth year, she proved to have marvelous magnetic or psychic power; at the end of the summer, so we were assured, it was taken away, except so far as it exists in many children of her age. She, aided by what we believe to be spiritual agents, entered our life and helped take away the sorrow that was there.

We do not assume to teach or to preach, but we do know that in our own case the fear of death is gone, and the sting is removed that was left by the passing of her upon whom had centered our hopes. For, after we had once established what we were satisfied was direct communication with our daughter, balm was brought to heal broken hearts. One might almost say that last summer, while I went to business every day, and worked harder than ever in my life and apparently accomplished more, and my wife went about her daily tasks much as usual, we really lived a dual life, part of it on a different plane.

For it was our privilege to talk with agents who

convinced us that they were now not of our world. Many of these identified themselves with the personalities of relatives. We were told much concerning the planes that intervene between this life and Heaven, something of the occupations of spirits and their festivities. While little information concerning Heaven itself was vouchsafed, we were assured that it differs much from the conventional and dreary resting-place pictured by orthodox imaginations. Earth was represented to us as a place of trial, with Hell very near it. No man who has tried to do right on earth, we were told, need fear his chances after he leaves it. But premeditated murder, suicide, injustice, deceit are among the sins that come near being unpardonable, and the man or woman who is at heart bad is condemned to remain on earth after death, sometimes for thousands of years, and one form of his punishment is often his ignorance that he is "dead" and inability to make anybody recognize him. This point has been dwelt upon by at least one writer of note. We have been told that the love of some one gone before may serve to release one who is earth-bound, provided his sin is of the lesser sort, and the real repentance of a sinner while on earth may give him a clean passport to the next plane. The man who has tried to do good here, and who is able to lift himself above things that are "of the earth, earthy," finds the progression to Heaven easy.

We are perhaps at fault in not having asked our questions with some attempt at system or relevancy. But nothing on our part was premeditated. We never laid down any plan. The conversations took place from day to day and were taken down word for word and written out the following day, very much as a reporter for an afternoon newspaper would deal with

the speeches or events of a convention. But in this connection I may repeat what was told us by our daughter and confirmed by other spirits or psychical agents that visited us, that our little "center," with its unique motive power, Love in varied phases—that of a sorrowing mother for her dead daughter, and the yearning of that daughter's spirit to give comfort; the grief of a lonely little girl for the dead parents she had hardly known and their great longing to see their child provided for; the tie between half-sisters and the development of a rare kind of parenthood, a woman's adoption of the child of a former husband by another wife and that child's growth in the affections of what might be called a step-father twice removed—these things proved of interest in the spirit world. And so, we were assured many times, from the little family group on the other side and the few "guides" who first came to us, the spirit audiences grew into hundreds and then into thousands, and we were told that our little camp near the Sound became every night a rendezvous for multitudes of the departed who had not so long shed their earthly garment that they had completely lost that most human of all traits, curiosity.

What may be called our own real, unassisted adventure into spirit communication did not begin until summer was well advanced, and then absolutely without premeditation. How we happened to start, quite accidentally, with an ordinary talking board, will be told later. From that we progressed to automatic writing, and by this means our daughter charted for us a new kind of Communication Board. Then followed tipping the table, and then, in brief time, levitation. It was not until we reached this stage of our experiences that I really believed we were witnessing

manifestations of extra-human power. I might mistrust somebody else's eyes, but not my own, especially when vision was supported by muscular evidence. My doubts did not disappear until I had seen a heavy table lifted four feet from the floor, when I could swear that the only physical force applied was several pairs of human hands resting lightly upon the top, and could also see that nothing else human, or belonging to a human being, was touching that table. My conviction was strengthened by having the table wrenched from my hands and whirled about by a force that must have measured fully one hundred pounds. Later I saw and felt a human being weighing one hundred and twenty pounds, lifted more than three feet above the floor. Of these things and more I shall tell farther on.

The discovery of the psychic power possessed by our little visitor, the half-sister of our dead daughter, was made entirely by chance. It was through this means that came the strangest and most satisfying of all our experiences—experiences that while at times they held something of solemnity, in the main were fraught with humor and laughter, and always with interest. It was in them that the personality and the voice of her we had mourned as lost came back to us every day, and again made complete our intimate family group.

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LOUISE

REVELATIONS OF LOUISE

CHAPTER I

LOUISE

L OUISE was just a girl who went through life joyously, dancing and singing as she went. She loved fun, and found it everywhere for herself and her friends. She adored chiffons and high heels and French hats, and could do her hair exquisitely, and she did not find disagreeable the attention and admiration that were always hers from the time she began to go to children's parties. Her great passion was music, and had not illness wrecked the last three years of her life her sweet voice must undoubtedly have gained public recognition.

To sketch the story of her brief existence here is necessary in order to make possible an understanding of this book and its purpose; and yet, to paint a picture of the Louise we knew and her friends knew, one must overcome a reluctance to bare sacred little details of family life. No one likes to parade his affections, any more than his woes or weaknesses. However, sidelights are recognized as a necessary part of successful illumination, unless it comes from above, and even then they help. And so, perhaps, such may assist to a fuller comprehension of the actual revelations of Louise's life on the spirit plane.

She was a little girl of eight when first I knew her, bright and winsome, and always trying to do something to make things pleasant for those about her. We like to think that a great deal of Louise came from her mother's father, a man of wide travel and great culture, who, after a somewhat adventurous career in South America, where he distinguished himself as an army surgeon and as a specialist in fighting pestilence and plague, elected to settle in a city in the Middle West, and to earn the love and respect of a small community rather than to go in for a national career. The Spanish-American War saw him volunteer for service, and to his medical experience and skill was due no small part of the reward or renown that came to other surgeons who stood nearer the spotlight of recognition. He knew by personal contact many of the great thinkers of his day, and his home was one of happiness. It was under his care that Louise passed the early years of her childhood—the formative period of her mind. From him she learned philosophy and charity and optimism. So excellent were the facilities of the schools in the city where her grandparents lived, that Louise remained with them until she had been graduated from the High School. She stood well in her classes, and as soon as she was old enough, took the leading rôles in the school plays with such credit that everybody who knew her said she was destined for the stage. My work, at the time, took me to Europe early every spring, and kept me there until the autumn, so that it was not until her grandfather died that she came to make her home with us.

In the summer of 1909 we took the children abroad for the first time. We had a delightful little house in South Kensington, London, with a big garden, and

Louise saw something of English life in town and out, and, of course, absorbed a good deal of what she saw. Late in summer there was Paris, and then Lake Lucerne, where we climbed mountains and rode in toy steamers, and dined at quaint little restaurants, and had altogether a good time. It was one of the happiest summers of our life.

Next year came the beginning of our life in Connecticut and a year or two later we built our country house, which came to be so much loved by the children. Louise always looked forward to going out there in the spring.

At length came the day when it was decided she should really take up music seriously, and her entrance at one of the most famous schools followed. In her singing she made progress that seemed to satisfy her teachers. Her third year's studies went wonderfully, but the exertions of the winter—study, long hours of practice, and the excitement and gayety of numerous dances and parties—taxed a constitution that was never robust. Her graduation was only a few weeks off when she developed a slight cough, and she was hurried away for a course of sleeping porches and open air and constant attendance.

Deprived of her music, her thoughts now turned to metaphysical subjects. Even when a child, she had been in the habit of reasoning for herself. Nobody ever made up her mind for her. She had always read a great deal, and now she began to interest herself in Christian Science. The idea was at first rather dismaying to us and to most of her friends, but we thought that if Christian Science could give her comfort and solace during the long, weary days she must spend on her couch, we could not object. It is fair

to say that the study of it helped keep up her spirits during the trying years, and the long period of worry over her brother in France, and the shock of the abandonment of her wedding when all was ready and even the day set.

By the early part of July her condition had so much improved that we were encouraged to hope that with her mother with her and in a high altitude and latitude, she might soon be restored to complete health, and so the two went to the highlands of Michigan, where my brother-in-law, a physician, resides. By autumn she seemed entirely recovered, and her mother left her to return home, expecting Louise to join us in a few weeks. But a stop with friends was scheduled, and when she got back to New York Louise was not as her mother had last seen her.

The house in the country was kept open all winter. Louise lived on the sleeping porch or in her own room with the windows wide open, and she grew rosy, and by spring had come to look so well that we took hope again. By summer she was able to resume an almost normal life, and we were once more happy, though in the background always lurked a shadow. Late in the summer her fiancé, just graduated from an officers' training camp, came on, and it was in the little rock garden I had completed shortly before that her engagement ring was placed upon her finger. Her future looked radiant, and we were all very happy.

Then in the autumn came relatives from Canada who were on their way to spend the winter in California, and Louise and "Auntie," her devoted great-aunt, were invited to go and spend the winter with them.

The last time I saw her was at the Grand Central

Terminal in the late autumn of 1917, when her mother left with her for Chicago, where she was to join "Auntie" and proceed to the Coast.

Reassuring reports came during the winter, although we learned with misgiving that a woman who was a Christian Science practitioner had made Louise's acquaintance and become intimate with her. We did not interfere, but by the Spring of 1918 we made up our minds that Colorado was the best place for our daughter. Her letters were always full of cheer and promise, the reports were excellent, and a few weeks in the Rockies, we thought, might restore her to complete health. Besides, her fiancé might be ordered to France any day, and it was decided they should be married before he went. So it was arranged that Louise should meet her mother in Denver early in June, and the wedding day was set for the middle of the month.

My wife went west toward a beckoning vision of Louise, radiant with health, waiting for her on the station platform at her journey's end, and on her way made the plans that a fond mother would make at such a time, even to choosing the place where, after the honeymoon had been cut short by the implacable summons overseas that must come to the bridegroom, she would take the little bride in the hope of finding solace for her amid happy surroundings.

But Louise was not on the platform at Denver. She was not at the hotel where she had been told to stop. Two telegrams were handed her mother. One told that Louise had not yet left California. The other was from her fiancé; his leave had been peremptorily cancelled, owing to his regiment's suddenly being ordered to France. And when, after a heart-breaking

few days of waiting the mother saw Louise alight from the eastbound train, her child's appearance revived all the agony, the terror of the last two years.

So, with all the pretty finery ready, the wedding ring bought, and even presents and congratulatory telegrams beginning to arrive, the next few days were anguishing, and the mother feared a serious setback. Louise bore it all philosophically and smilingly—no tears, no regrets. But her health grew worse, in spite of the best skill, and what were considered perfect climatic conditions. A few weeks later, when news of her brother's serious wounding came, the shock proved severe in its effects. However, she seemed to rally, and when word arrived that his wounds would not prove fatal and that he would not be disabled, was happy again, and actually in gay spirits. Then, at last, her fiancé's letters began to arrive, and these were a source of great joy.

The doctor thought she was improving so fast that toward the end of the summer he told her mother she could go back East and attend to some pressing affairs, and she left her darling to the care of her devoted "Auntie" and a friend.

Cheering news came to us and this kept coming almost up to the end. The doctor continued to make favorable reports, and Louise herself wrote her mother long, bright and even funny letters, so that we both felt much encouraged. It was only the intuition of "Auntie" that divined what the doctor did not see. About the middle of October she began to send apprehensive letters. Toward the end of the month she wrote insisting that I break the news to the mother that all was not going well. I telegraphed the doctor and was reassured, but directed that a consultation be

held. Then, finally, I received in Washington, the first week in November, a telegram from the doctor which sent me hurrying home. Louise's condition had developed seriously, it said, and if we wished to have her spend her last days with those she loved, we had better come for her soon.

Her mother took the first train for Denver. When she saw Louise, Death was stamped on the child's face, a face illumined by such a sweet, ingratiating smile of welcome! Her arms encircled her mother lovingly, and with seeming strength. The thought of returning to her beloved Eastern home gave her unalloyed pleasure. She said, smilingly, "It will mean stretchers and ambulances, Mummy dear, but I shall be all right when I get there."

Her slogan seemed to be, "Everything will be all right." She said it many times during the brief six hours her mother had of her.

It seemed quite possible to take her back East, and every arrangement was made to start the following night.

She went on the train they had chosen, but only her wonderful spirit occupied the compartment with her mother. Under its sweet influence the latter was made to forget the pitiful part of her child that traveled in a car ahead, and which, perhaps to save her reason, had somehow become almost meaningless.

A SEARCH FOR SOLACE



CHAPTER II

A SEARCH FOR SOLACE

AS it was Louise's mother who took the first steps that led to the happenings of which the rest of this narrative will tell, and as the whole book is a first-hand report, I have had her write, from her notes, the story of why she came to seek the aid of a spiritualistic medium, and with what success. It follows:

From the moment my dear child relaxed in my arms and I knew her spirit had left, I have felt that a spirit could as easily walk out of the body as we do out of our homes, so suddenly and so quietly was this process accomplished. Moreover I believe that the spirit frequently does leave the body, mostly during sleep; but in sleep a filament of attachment, a way back, as it were, remains. And it is when the home in which the spirit lives and functions becomes uninhabitable that it is willing or perhaps obliged permanently to detach itself. When quite detached, the spirit begins its life as an entity, and in the case of my daughter this happened at once, for she came to me immediately. She knew from the great absorbing love I had for her that my grief might prove unbearable.

But there was no grief. I felt uplifted, exalted—even joyous. I felt luminous and light. The most dreadful thing in the world had happened to me, yet

grief did not strike me down. And on the long journey East I felt that wonderful presence. It was as if some strong force was influencing my mind to forget the pathetic cargo that journeyed with me in the baggage car ahead.

That first day on the train brought the news of the signing of the Armistice, and joyous clangor met us at every station. Had not Louise been there with her fortifying influence, my nerves, my brain could not have endured the strain, although it meant my son's release from the European Inferno, and that in all probability one child, at least, would be spared me.

During those days before the last trying one at Woodlawn, I felt her always near, encouraging, caressing me, and as I stood there by the open grave wondering what would happen to me, a sweet voice whispered:

"Don't think for a moment that I am there, for I am standing right beside you. *That* is nothing; and, Mummy dear, I feel like saying, 'Here goes nothing'; for that is what it is—nothing, nothing, nothing.' "

This was whispered in a way so subtly amusing that I almost laughed. I went away feeling strongly that my child had merely cast off an old dress of which she was very tired, to wrap herself in luminous, fadeless draperies.

I had begun to think very much about "Raymond," a book I had read two years before without being at all convinced that communication was possible, or that even survival had been proven. This was not the fault of Sir Oliver Lodge, but was due entirely to the prejudice of ignorance. Now I felt a yearning for some way to communicate with my child who had gone. The voice that spoke those sweet words of com-

fort could have belonged to none other than Louise. I was hungry for more.

It was through hearing of her just by chance that I found a medium. I took every precaution that she should know nothing about me or what brought me to her. My appointment with Mrs. S. was achieved with some difficulty, as she was very busy with her regular work in the Society for Psychical Research, and in New York mediums are obliged to be cautious, as there is a law against their using their gift. A mean advantage is sometimes taken of them by detectives who come for sittings professing to be in sorrow. Of course, there are many charlatans who deserve their fate; but it is very hard on the true mediums, sensitive in every meaning of the word. These should be carefully protected; for their work in bringing comfort to stricken hearts is a great one, and I know that even the most needy of them do much just through kindness and sympathy for those who cannot pay. It is wonderful to think that they are willing to become absolutely unconscious and put themselves at our mercy for an hour or more at a time, while we listen, for all they know, to the inmost secrets of their souls.

In response to my urgent pleadings over the telephone, Mrs. S. said she would see me Thanksgiving morning, in case she did not have to be out of town that day. The night before, I called her up with apprehension, for the appointment meant so much to me, and to my great joy she said she would be able to keep the appointment that had been tentatively made.

It was my first experience with a medium, and although I felt somewhat constrained at first, her kind

manner soon put me quite at ease. While the shades were drawn, it was sunny outside and the room was light enough for me to write in comfort.

Mrs. S. was both clairvoyant and clairaudient, and it was not long before she said:

"A man who says he is your Uncle J. is standing beside me. He says he went over thirty-four years ago. He is dark, with a black mustache."

I thought of my father's brothers, Uncle James and Uncle Joseph, but the description did not fit either of them. When I said this, the spirit vanished and has never returned. I felt quite chagrined when, upon returning home and telling my aunt, my mother's sister, of this experience, she said: "Well, have you forgotten your Uncle Jack, my brother? The description is of him." And on counting up, we found that he had died thirty-four years before.

Then came one of my life's greatest surprises, for the medium suddenly exclaimed:

"Why, here is some one who says he was your husband. He wants to tell you that he met *your* daughter when she came over. He emphasizes the fact that she is your daughter because he says you changed her name to that of your present husband. But he says he is worried about his little dark-haired daughter whom he left motherless and fatherless, and with no means of support. He says he sees now the advantages you gave his children, and is deeply concerned about his dark-haired daughter."

I had heard many years before that my divorced husband had married again and a vague rumor that there were children; but he and his entire family had passed completely out of my life. I felt sure the "dark-haired" daughter must be my Louise's half-sis-

ter, and that he was sending me a plea to aid her. Although I set to work at once to find the child, it was five weeks before I located her, living with some maternal relatives in the Far West. But this dear child's story will be told later.

My former husband having thus unburdened himself of his paternal anxiety, I found the medium suddenly shutting her eyes and settling down among the pillows of her reclining chair as if for a nap. Her face grew pale, thinner. I was alarmed, fearing she had fainted, and moved to aid her, when her lips began to move and she whispered:

"Your daughter is here. I cannot see her, but the guide is describing her. She is like a lovely lily now and not very strong yet. She has been over only a short time, but she wants to reassure her mother—to tell her never to have any regrets, nor to think all that was possible had not been done. The trouble was more deep-seated than the doctors knew."

She continued, as if quoting my child:

"When you sat beside me on that last day I felt that everything was coming out for the best and although I did not want to die, when I found myself slipping away, I was not sorry, for beautiful voices were in my ears and gentle hands were lifting me. I shall soon be singing again—for large audiences, like John McCormack, the famous tenor.'"

The medium said in her own words:

"She is laughing about it."

Louise used to be fond of John McCormack's pleasing but sometimes mawkish Irish melodies, and had spoken of his tremendous success with some wonder as well as admiration. Often she had amused us with her imitations of him.

Quoting Louise, the medium resumed:

"'I had not been here long, Mother, when I knew this was the real life. All fear and doubt is removed, the vision is clear, the way is clear, the goal perfect and everything is clearly explained to us. High, thick, blank, impenetrable walls do not surround us here, or rise up before that we seek to know.'"

She spoke of several things that had occurred during the last few hours of her life and of the long, dreary journey across the continent when she tried to make me feel—and successfully—that her spirit was always right by my side.

I asked:

"What was one of the first things you did after passing over?"

"'I came to Auntie,' " was the reply.

This dear aunt of mine, after whom Louise was named, had been devoted to her from infancy and had been with her to the last. She had told me of the beautiful vision of Louise which had appeared to her the night Louise left us. She came in rosy health, with shining eyes and hair and told Auntie that everything was "all right."

This experience was a great solace to this aunt, who had loved the child as a mother, and I was delighted to have the incident verified through the medium.

All that Mrs. S. said on this, my first visit, was evidential, and I know that she was quite ignorant of my identity or what had brought me to her. I came away feeling well satisfied that I had communed with my beloved child. I had many sittings with Mrs. S. afterwards and something evidential was always given me.

Of course, very often it seemed as if "the wires became crossed" and strangers tried to get messages through. Sometimes I was able to recognize these and carry them to the destinations intended. One insistent demand for immediate recognition came several times from "R. R." to "V. G. O." The latter I could not identify until finally one day I told the incident to an acquaintance whose initials were "V. G. O." She was quite moved, and said "Yes, an old friend who loved me in his youth and who is now dead, had those initials. He told me he would wait for me over there."

His message was only that he was happy and waiting for her. He began to say more, but paused, and then cautiously concluded, "But no more must be said about this." I attributed this access of discretion to the fact that the lady had a husband on the earth plane. I have learned that spirits are most discreet. They never make a *faux pas* nor get any one in trouble.

I sat with Mrs. S. approximately once a week all winter. These sittings were for the most part joyous occasions for me, and even if there had not been a great quantity of what is known in psychical circles as evidential matter, I could not have doubted that Louise was there. I shall give some examples of the evidential messages, as they, naturally, are more convincing than anything else.

At all the sittings Louise referred to her love for music or to her musical progress. I will write word for word what she said, sometimes through White Light, Mrs. S.'s guide, and sometimes when the medium was quoting her words.

December 15, 1918.

(Message transmitted through guide.)

"Tell Mother that the chances here are better than on earth for genius to work itself out. Tell her not to mourn for me as for one who has finished her work, but to think of me as one who is just carrying out the highest aspirations of her mother and herself."

Then Louise herself spoke through the medium and said with great enthusiasm:

"'And oh, the symphonies I am privileged to hear! When I first went over I could hear so much music and did not know where it came from. The teacher said I was attuned to that vibration.'"

(Same day, later.)

"'Tell Mother I am so happy to be practicing my music. It is very good to know that every one can carry on to fruition his aspirations and talents—his expression. It fills my heart to overflowing to speak of music. Ask Mother if she remembers what I was striving for—a certain class of music that I was anxious to accomplish.'"

The medium said:

"She wants Mother to know that she is acquiring that now."

I remarked to her:

"Yes; certain grand opera rôles."

The guide continued: "Her physical condition kept her from doing her best. She had trouble in registering her higher tones. She is so happy to see that Mother understands she is doing here what she could not do on earth, hampered as she was physically. But

now she is the embodiment of the 'Spring Song.' She lives in the vibrations of love, harmony and devotion."

January 5.

Mrs. S., in a clairaudient state, said: "Here is Louise speaking of some one who used to accompany her on the piano and violin."

Then as if from Louise herself came this: "I owe all my training to you, which establishes me in a higher vibration and makes me attuned to the great symphonies of the spirit plane. I have so much to thank you for. We were pals and still are.'"

February 23.

In Louise's words:

"'I am singing a song, "Just You and I."'" Later: "The great musicians are all here, those who are seeking the truth of their art. I have seen all the old masters in the great Forum. It is like going to the Metropolitan. Their music is caught by ears on the earth plane which are attuned to it. That is inspiration. Look at Mozart in his childhood receiving it, bringing forth his great genius at the age of five.'"

In casual conversation, I took occasion, several sittings later, to find out if Mrs. S. knew the facts of Mozart's childhood. She did not, nor did I until I looked them up. This might be called evidential.

Through all my sittings with Mrs. S. Louise continually referred to music and the joy of it as if her three years' deprivation had made her return to it ecstasy. Dancing had its place in the revelations of her new life and the medium's hands and arms were sometimes used in graceful gesturing to waltz time.

Through all my early sittings I was able to maintain a strict incognito, and I must say that Mrs. S. was just as eager as I was for evidential matter and never asked me leading questions.

My daughter had been an ardent student of Christian Science, and as there was no way for the medium to know this, I considered this message from Louise of great importance:

"Mother, I have been completely disillusioned about Christian Science. You cannot ignore the physical body while the spirit is functioning in it. Christian Scientists try to live on the earth plane as we do on the spirit plane. But it is not reasonable; it cannot be done. It was a false message that deluded Mrs. Eddy in the shedding of the physical on the earth plane. Here is a problem for chemists; I cast off my physical body, and yet I have a perfectly substantial one left. Although Christian Science taught me to disregard the body, when I look back on the physical I recognize its reality because its imprint is left on the spiritual body. The spirit holds all that was beautiful and relinquishes all that was imperfect."

At one sitting she said: "I realized how much Daddy was missing me when he visited my last resting place by himself." I repeated this to her Daddy on my return as one of the mistakes which are sometimes made, but he said, "No, it was not a mistake; I did go there alone, but did not tell you about it."

I could name dozens of instances to prove that my daughter was often with us in the family circle. She spoke very sympathetically of her old Auntie's having lost a front tooth, a fact which meant nothing to the medium, as she had not known of Auntie's existence.

Another time Louise said: "I was so sorry for

you, Mother, when you were looking over my letters yesterday. I was there and tried to cheer you up.'"

She had succeeded, for I accomplished with pleasure an afternoon's ordeal which I had been putting off with dread.

I had a great dread of going through her trunks, but at last planned to do it on a certain Monday. The day before, I was as usual with Mrs. S. and was quite surprised when in a trance she said, quoting Louise: "'Mother, no tears to-morrow when you look over my things; remember that.'" And then for the first time she spoke the name of her half-sister, whom I shall call "Violet." It was to find things suitable to send to her little sister that I meant to go through with this painful task.

The first time I did canteen work at the Eagle Hut was last New Year's Day. I served pie most of the time. On my next visit to the medium, Louise came during the trance saying: "'I was with you on your 'soldier's day,' and saw you handing out the pie—mince pie, apple pie and other kinds. I circulated among the boys and heard them talk and felt so glad, for the day was for them the beginning of a year of peace.'"

On March 9, my sitting with Mrs. S. had an unusual feature. For the first time Louise mentioned dogs, and made me feel very happy, showing that she still retained a love for animals. She described two pets she had loved as a child. Her heart had been almost broken when they died. Mrs. S., at the time clairaudient, not completely in a trance, said: "Your daughter is speaking of a little fluffy dog—Chi-Chi-Chi—oh, yes, Chico, and also a tan-colored, rather brown dog whose name began with B. She wants you to know that they are with her."

"Chico" was a Maltese terrier of her tiny girlhood and delighted us with his great intelligence and his tricks for many years. Then came "Biddy," the Irish terrier with soft, loving eyes, also much beloved. Chico died at a good age, and his demise was not a tragedy; but Biddy was cut off from life too young, and under tragic circumstances. A snapshot of her pet adorned the locket of a sad little girl for many months.

One day Louise said: "'Now, Mummy, I am going to give you something characteristic and evidential.'" Mrs. S. at the time was in a deep trance. "'I come into the house and come right in to you and Daddy and tell you all the news; so happy; I am walking through the house, going to my room, making myself complete in my boudoir, putting on my cap and *négligée* of filmy, two-toned chiffon. You call out, 'Have you gone to bed?' I respond that I want to read my book. 'I will finish it and then go to sleep.' Isn't that characteristic, like old times?'"

I can truthfully say that this was an almost nightly occurrence in those happy days.

I feel that perhaps I have not done full justice to my medium, but I have chosen only those messages which came through most clearly and have omitted much that came to me about the glory of the spiritual existence. Nor have I spoken of my many relatives who registered, frequently recalling the past. I have left out all that is vague and mystic. There is so much to be told that is neither vague nor mystic; but the greater part of it came in our home life with Louise, which began so strangely during the early part of the summer.

IN QUEST OF PROOF

CHAPTER III

IN QUEST OF PROOF

WHEN my wife spoke to me the first time about going to see a medium, I had the average man's repugnance to the idea, strengthened by a newspaper remembrance of the exposure of numerous persons who had pretended to be able "to raise spirits." But, after some consideration, I concluded that if there was comfort and consolation anywhere for her in her sorrow, no means that offered the slightest possibility of result should be despised. And when she returned that Thanksgiving afternoon, two hours after the cook had announced dinner and I had done some telephoning about town through fear that she had met with an accident, I was astonished at the joy in her face. Her narration of what she had seen and heard impressed me. Certainly there was something to be said for mediums—at least for one. However, while affection and my own sorrow insured a sympathetic ear, I looked upon the thing altogether as a psychopathic experiment that had started well.

After each of her succeeding visits to the medium, D. read me her notes, and I shared with her the wonder, but not the faith, she early acquired. Then, as time passed, I gradually made up my mind that I, too, would see Mrs. S. and judge for myself as to her powers and her accomplishments. However willing might be the tender heart that cried out for healing

to accept anything that promised to bind up its wound, I, at least, was not credulous—would not be imposed upon. Therefore, while I made my early investigations in apparent frankness and with heart aching for something my reason could accept, I maintained a reserve that was, to say the least, skeptical, and weighed carefully what I saw and heard.

I don't think that Mrs. S. had the slightest clew to my identity when, after several attempts to make an appointment, I visited her on the evening of January 27. I wore no mourning, and had made the appointment through the use of the name of a literary man, an acquaintance of mine, not of D.'s, who, I had learned by accident, was a friend of the medium's.

We had some talk upon general subjects, but I could not detect that she made any effort to establish my identity. After some time she put a black bandage about her eyes, saying that it sometimes helped her to go to sleep. It was perhaps two minutes afterward that she began to talk. Followed the mention of names which might or might not be those of friends of mine who had died. I thought to test her by trying to get in communication with one, Captain Emery Rice, of whom I had been very fond, and who, after noteworthy service in command of the transport *Mongolia*, had died suddenly from pneumonia shortly before. I merely said that I wished to talk with a friend of mine who had died recently. At length she said, "I am not seeing—just getting an impression of a gentleman. Rather large—something about 'W.' Maybe, Washington. The spirit seems to go there. He wants me to go to Washington."

The last time I saw Emery Rice was in Washington in November, 1917.

However, in that direction I got no further. Then came much more, disjointedly. Some of it recalled three brothers, friends of my youth, who had met tragic deaths by drowning, and then again, later, something which might be about another friend of mine who had died more recently.

"It seems as if there was something peculiar about the burial. It was not a burial in the usual way," said the medium.

G., a young man who some years ago was my stenographer, had died a few days before my visit to Mrs. S., and his body had been cremated.

"Can you place C-r?" asked the medium. I could place these letters, of course, as the first two of my own name, but I did not answer. There was much more, all of which was too vague to be satisfactory. Then, suddenly, the medium said, "I wish you could place the name of Jean or Jane—Emily Jane."

"Emily" was the name of my paternal grandmother, but I could not remember an "Emily Jane."

A little later. "Will you recall the name, 'Fritz'? He is trying to get a last name—'C.'—might that be 'C-r-o-c'? I am trying to get a last name."

Then: "I wish you could recognize a beautiful young woman here. She is very young, in her early twenties. She wants me to call 'Dad'—I wish you could recognize her. Very young, beautiful hair, blue eyes. Does she call you 'B'? Do you call that 'Bert'?"

"Bert" is the name by which I have usually been called.

"She says she has overcome physical conditions, having just wasted away; weak, but now strong and growing. She is speaking about K. Calling K. Maybe I'll say, 'my brother K.' She is speaking: 'The

grave where you walked, just you and I. Don't be lonely now; no separation. I can speak to you.' "

It so happened that on the morning of the funeral I had left my wife and had gone back alone to the grave. D. had not known anything of this.

" 'Daddy, will you let me guide you? Brush back your hair. Things will be all right. I will just soothe you. I want to go home. To a home' "—the medium resumed in her own voice: "Seems to be going to another home; going through Greenwich—beautiful fields, flowers, trees, near water; maybe for the summer,—a summer place—'If only I can sing the songs I would like to sing to you. I know it would open up the beauties of this life to you as it did for me when I would sing. Love to Mother.' "

At this, the medium blew a kiss with her hand. This was a favorite gesture of Louise's.

At my second sitting, on February 10, the medium said, after going into a trance:

"There seem to be three in your family—yes—the lady here is reaching out to three in your family. She is speaking of a name 'L. C.' or 'Elsie': she is trying to call—it sounds like 'Louie'—'L-o' maybe, yes 'Lou.' This is the spirit of a beautiful young woman. Her father is with her and wants you to know she is strong. Life went out like sands running through an hour glass, slowly ebbing away.

" 'We are going away out West. I am waving my handkerchief at you at the Station. Good-by!—the last time you saw me. You are reading the morning paper. I want you to know I am trying to read the morning paper for you. Just as I lean over your shoulder, as you get the glint of sunlight on your paper, sometimes sad, sometimes glad—knowing what

is going on.' She speaks of 'D-o-l'—'D-o-l-o-r'—she is trying to speak a name. (Dolores is her mother's name.) Now it sounds like 'Pat'; no, she is trying to speak of 'Mother—pet.' She speaks of four in the family and says that autumn leaves cover the grave. 'I am speaking to Daddy. I just want to register Love that is growing steadily for him. I don't want Mother to think I have gone. I am just beside her.' "

The medium resumed in her own voice: "Your dear one that has just crossed the threshold to what you call The Unseen, says her place is just as real as your plane. 'We have steps,' she says. 'We go down steps and up steps, and have beautiful gardens, beautiful houses and everything in keeping.' She is speaking of a beautiful picture being enlarged."

We had just had some enlargements made of Louise's photograph.

" 'Speak to Mother and tell her the flowers are real, just the same as they were in the rock garden. We are going out to the rock' "—(pause). "I cannot quite make out what she is saying," said the medium. "She speaks of a little garden house—a little summer house. She is speaking of something so lovely, as if saying—'rock—rock—garden?' Yes, 'rock-garden.' She says that is it. She seems to have had so much enjoyment there. 'I am speaking about the past, Daddy. There are flowers in the garden. Water is just running out from the house.' It seems as if writing has been done there."

Louise's favorite haunts on the place in Connecticut were the little summer house that I had built at the entrance to our garden, and a tiny rock garden that I myself had constructed on the right side of the entrance to the grounds. At the summit of this little

rock garden was a pool which we used to fill with water brought from the house by the garden hose. There was a little waterfall and a toy brook, and in a rustic seat overlooking this miniature landscape, Louise loved to sit and write her letters.

At my sitting on February 24, there were other arrivals whose messages stirred recollections of years past, but none whom I could positively identify, until finally Mrs. S. said: "There seems to be a wheelbarrow here; you seem to be holding it; some one gets into it—a young woman—and you are going down a path."

I had often ridden Louise in a wheelbarrow on the garden paths.

"She is trying to call a name—'K.' Now she is calling 'Papa' and she is calling 'Daddy.' She seems to have two fathers. She is speaking of an aunt; and yet it isn't exactly an aunt."

"Auntie" in our family means Louise's great-aunt.

"She is calling 'Dick.' She says Dick has been relieved."

"Dick" was her fiancé. He was momentarily expected to start home from France.

Suddenly the medium mentioned the name of Louise's brother. "She says—— (giving our son's name) is coming back. He will take off his hat and hang it up. She is speaking of the time she saw you last, when you went to the train to see her off. She was going West.

"She is trying to call a man's name. It sounds like 'Bertram'; it seems to go with a name like 'Crockett'; that is what she seems to say. I seem to want to call the name of Emery R.' "

That sounded as if it might be "Emery Rice," but more did not come.

"She says, 'Tell Daddy not to feel I have gone to a Land of Promise, but to a land of realities. I am living in the body again; am in the home just as when we left off.'

"You seem to have in your pocket something that opens and shuts that belonged to Louise," said the medium. "I want to hold it."

It so happened that in my pocket was a small pen-knife that really had belonged to Louise. I gave it to Mrs. S. and she held it in her hand.

"I hear water trickling down. I am taken to a place where I hear it,—maybe through rocks.' "

This recalled the rock garden.

Here followed some minutes during which disconnected messages seemed to come, and then this:

"I hear the name of Smith, or something similar—a woman who was cremated or burned. Could that have been thirteen years ago? I get the idea that she was either a widow, or not married."

This recalled a tragic circumstance that happened at just about the date mentioned by the medium. A woman I had known very well some years before had murdered her husband, or supposed husband, whose name was Smith, and set fire to their house, and the bodies of both were found in the ruins.

At my next meeting with Mrs. S., in March, I got a great deal of evidential matter, though afterward I still doubted.

Apparently, Louise came at once, for the medium began: "I wish you would answer about a name that sounds like 'Bert.' She speaks of a little seat—a resting-place, a bench. She seems to get out of an auto-

mobile to sit on the bench. She speaks of 'Daddy.' She is speaking of your brother not wanting to come out of the body."

My brother had died just a few days before.

"He is now conscious of a new body. He is conscious of his mother. It seems as if she wrapped something up in a handkerchief. If she would not look at this so often, it would help him and also help her."

I learned afterwards that while my brother's body lay waiting for burial, my mother had cut off a lock of his hair.

After an interval Louise was speaking again: "Tell Daddy it is all right to go on and do as he has been doing.' She is speaking about a house. It seems as if you have been in a quandary as to what to do. 'Tell Daddy to go on as he started to do. It is all right.' She is speaking of summer near the water and is so happy about it. Reminds her of old times."

We were considering renting our country house and building a small camp near it.

"There seem to be two states of existence in living here; one that is normal, enjoying things of this life, and again coming down and enjoying what you enjoy, in the selfsame way. Mother must dry her tears as she lays aside my music books, because I sing the same songs and feel the same love and joy.'

"She is speaking of a foster sister making merry and light-hearted about leaving. She says an opening has been made to set the child free."

Later, the medium continued, as if quoting Louise:

"I weep now because I wanted to stay. I did want to stay. I weep now because I see my feeble flutterings in trying to gain a true thought of my physical

life—but it was not to be. Now I have gained the true body, so I am satisfied; but if you had asked me, Daddy, to make a choice, I would have stayed. I wanted to stay until that last vision, when I saw and knew. I was so glad there was another place for me. Here I am living, I find, in the same body that you knew and that I loved and mother loved. I would say my ship needs a little steering—I mean, my body—in order for me to come back and live near you, but then I am going to my harbor safe. I see no difference, only I am not seeing merely through a veil. That is all the difference. Your book will make me happy, and as I help you, it will really make me feel I have not lost out.’ ”

She had urged me at a previous sitting to write a book.

The medium resumed: “Two gentlemen have come in, hand-in-hand. One has a name that sounds like ‘Smith’ or some common name, similar to that. One wants to say ‘Professor Reese.’ One of the gentlemen wore a beard. He is so glad you are here. He pats you on your shoulder. The other says he wants to talk about chemistry—about the chemicals of the new body. They are both trying to get through that they know you. Do you recall a man named Simpson?”

Two of the Professors at the College I attended twenty-eight years before were Professors Reese and Simpson. I was fond of both, particularly of Professor Reese, a delightful man and scholar, who wore a beard. Professor Simpson taught chemistry.

There came a great deal more, apparently from different spirits that had known me, until the medium said: “Louise says to tell you that it is like a passing

show here, as the spirits of those who loved you when in the body come in and try to get through to speak to you. If you just knew how happy it makes one living in the astral body to come down to you in the physical plane, realizing that they can speak to you! She says she will sing in your mind; that her voice will register and will soothe you, but the vibration of the physical plane cannot catch the echo of the vibration of the spirit. That is why you have not heard when she has spoken to you."

VIOLET

CHAPTER IV

VIOLET

AFTER her very first visit to Mrs. S., when her children's father so unexpectedly came through from the spirit world to urge on her the care of the child of his second marriage, D. lost no time in responding to his wish. So completely had his family dispersed that it was more than a month before the child's address could be found. She was so far away that to go to see her or to have her come on at that time was out of the question. And so a letter was written telling Violet of the relationship, and of her sister who had gone and her half-brother. Her reply was all that could have been wished, and showed for a little girl only twelve years old a depth of feeling almost unbelievable.

She had never heard of D. or of the latter's children, and as an orphan and an only child, hers had been a very dreary little life. A very animated correspondence was begun and continued, and her letters were all so full of love for D. and for the newly-discovered soldier brother, that it did not seem odd when she began to call the former, "Mother." And so it was that six months after we had first learned of her existence, she came to spend her vacation with us—the happiest of her life, she now says.

It was difficult to induce her to tell her story, but

little by little we pieced it together. It would require one such as the creator of "Oliver Twist" to do justice to that sorrowful little tale. I can only set it down as nearly as possible in her own words, as we got it from her from time to time, and bit by bit.

THE STORY OF VIOLET

I suppose I was always happy before my mother died. I was only five then, but I can remember how sweet and good she was to me. Even in those last months of her painful illness there was a Christmas tree and a birthday party—the last I was to know for several years.

My father was in the timber and lumber business and he had to go away from home a great deal. He had quarreled with my mother's parents and would not let them take care of me, although they begged to be allowed to do so. Instead, he advertised for some motherly woman who would be willing to have me live in her home and look after me. At this time he did not have very much money, and he owed a lot, so I think this seemed to him the best way to deal with the problem of me. No real, motherly woman seemed to answer father's advertisement, and the first strange house I actually lived in was that of two elderly sisters, both unmarried. I believe they tried to be kind, but they did not understand little girls, and many a night I cried myself to sleep because I was so lonely. Father's short visits were the only bright spots in my life at this time, and on one of these he found me so sad that he changed my home, and I next went to live with a married woman and her grown-up daughter.

All the toys that had been given me in my happy

days went with me. My dolls were my only friends and they seemed just like people. I suppose this woman was not unkind, but she just couldn't bear seeing toys scattered about. She said they were disorderly and that they took up too much room. One day she robbed me of all of them, and gave them to a little German girl who lived in the same street. That is, she wanted to give them all, but she did not get my Teddy Bear, because I clung to it, crying, and kicking, too, I fear. I just could not bear to part with Teddy, because his woolly head always lay close to mine when I went to sleep, and he seemed, sometimes, to be my only friend. My mother had given him to me on my third birthday, and he was the dearest of all my toys. The little German girl's mother was the woman's closest friend, so often I used to see my dear dollies being nursed, and very badly too, by that awful little person. I would not let Teddy out of my sight in those days, for he was the last treasure I had.

When my father came on his next visit, I told him how unhappy I was, for it really broke my heart to see that little Gretchen taking out in my doll carriage my beautiful Marion with her real, curly hair, her great big brown eyes, and her beautiful complexion; and to see Marion wearing her very best dress on week days worried me a lot. My poor little rag dolls, so faithful always, so ready to listen, and so nice to cuddle, did not count at all, as I could plainly see when I spied through the picket fence, for they were just kicked about. I really felt just like one of them.

Although Father laughed at that when I told him, he came to know that I was truly unhappy and promised to find me a happier place to live in. One day he came back very much pleased. He had found just the sort

of place we had dreamt about—out in the country, on a large stock farm, and near a good school. The woman who managed it was lonely and would love to have a little girl for company. This was a very long way from Detroit, our home, and when father left me I didn't know that it would be several months before I would see him again.

He had hardly gone, after telling me many times to be a good little girl and to try to be happy in this lovely place, when my new guardian told me to stop crying, as she wished to teach me how to set the table for supper.

She showed me the longest table I had ever seen and I helped her spread over it a red, checkered cloth. I was very glad, after we put sixteen plates on the table, because I thought it must mean that there would be many children, some of whom might be playmates. I enjoyed this work so much and put my whole soul into it. When it was done, my guardian, who seemed to be pleased with the way I learned, gave me a large pan of cold potatoes to peel and slice while she made cornbread. When I had finished this task, one that I had never had to do before, my hands were cramped and shaking. However, I was delighted when she told me that I would be a very useful little girl.

Then rough-looking men began to come in and took turns washing at the sink before going to the table. Some of them noticed me and joked Mrs. R. about her "new cook." They weren't exactly unkind, but their manners frightened me. I kept looking for children to come in with them, but none did, except the twelve-year-old son of my guardian, whom she met with hugs and kisses and questions about what he had been doing. I wished somebody would take some in-

terest in me. She pointed me out to the boy and said she hoped we would be friends. He gave me a long, stony stare and shrugged his shoulders, but said nothing, and I cannot remember that he ever said a kind word to me during all the time I stayed under his mother's roof. I was only seven, and his threatening frowns easily frightened me. He never actually struck me, but often he acted as though he was going to do so, and I kept as far away from him as possible. It only made his mother laugh to see how he could scare me without touching me.

I don't suppose I can ever forget that first night. After supper Mrs. R. said: "I am so tired I wonder if you would be a smart girl and wash the dishes?"

So I washed the whole lot and wiped them all, and then set the table for breakfast. She laughed because I was so awkward, but it was hard work and very late when I finished. I think I must have been already asleep when she led me upstairs, for I did not notice until morning that I was not sleeping in a bed, but on a pile of old comfortables spread on the floor of what looked like a good-sized closet, without any windows. The door opened on a hall, and the only air and light came through the doorway. The house was very large, but the thirteen farmhands all lived there, so the closet was the only room left for me. You see Father did not often talk to people about little things, and he forgot to ask to see where I was going to sleep, for I am sure he would not have left me there had he known. He just paid for my board and care, and I suppose he thought that in that great big house I would surely be given a comfortable room.

My first morning in this new home was a very busy time. I helped make beds, wash dishes and scrub.

Mrs. R. stood over me and showed me how to scrub the kitchen floor and told me I should always have to keep it clean. I tried hard to do as she said, but I broke down many times over this task, sobbing as if my heart would break. I was so homesick and had such a terrible, gnawing pain. Of course, I loved my father, but I felt that he had gone back on me.

Winter was coming and I began to go to school. There were only half-day sessions, and after I helped get breakfast ready, I had to trudge three miles to the schoolhouse and then back. I liked school, and I worked very hard to learn to write. More than anything else, I wanted to be able to write a letter to my father telling him just how everything was with me.

Almost every minute that I did not spend at school, or going and coming, I had to do house-work. Help was hard to get, so I had no time at all to myself except when I was in school. Mrs. R. soon became very hard and cross with me, and many a slap, and often a beating, taught me that I must do my work well. Nothing was ever said about doing anything to make me happier, and I know now that I grew silent and sullen, for the harsh treatment made me brood a great deal over my miserable little lot. It was impossible to tuck the covering around me at night, and I used to get very cold as well as very much frightened in my dark closet those long, dreary nights. It was a very cold winter and there was no heat in that part of the house, so I soon developed rheumatism in my hips and knees, which I still have. Of course, it was very painful to walk to school with the terrible aching in my hips and knees, but I used to bite my lips and just make my feet carry me, because I could not bear to have my only source of pleasure taken away.

In the spring Father came to see me, and he seemed much depressed at my condition. He had a stormy scene with Mrs. R., who had treated me so cruelly, and took me away, declaring he would never part with me again. I was very, very happy. It was really joy to be clasped in his loving arms once more and to hear his merry laugh. He was really very fascinating and I just adored him. He tried hard to keep me with him at hotels and boarding houses, but on account of his business he had to be away a great deal, and my life soon became one of confusion—going about from place to place, seeing nobody but strangers and only living for the times when Father could actually be with me.

After a while he thought he had found a way of having me properly looked after. Across the river from Detroit was a convent, where he placed me, and where I spent some happy, peaceful moments with the sweet sisters, who tried to ease the pains in my body, from which I still suffered, and to soothe the aching which still seemed to burn my heart and mind.

But it seemed as if I could not have peace long, for on a reception day Father came to see me and met the mother of one of the older pupils in the school. They talked a long time. She was a widow, and both complained of the loneliness of their lives and told of their longing for a home; she, for her fatherless child, and he for motherless little me. After a few weeks the school term ended, and this woman and my father got married, and we all went to live together in a house that my father called "home." He seemed very proud of it and said to me, "No more unhappiness for you, my darling."

His wife had seemed kind as long as I saw her at

the convent, and I was so glad to call her "Mother," and to feel that some one was willing to act as a mother to me. But it was not long before she proved to be just as bad as any step-mother I had ever read about. Maybe part of it was due to her being disappointed in Father. At least, I know she was disappointed about money. He always felt and talked like a rich man, but there never was enough money for simple comforts, let alone other things. I soon found I could never do anything to please my step-mother, though I tried very hard, and she seemed to be able to turn everything into an excuse to punish me. Her own daughter, nearly twice my age, was very mischievous. She would break a dish, eat the cake intended for supper, or upset the furniture, and say that I had done it. Then I would be beaten while that girl looked on and laughed. I was never believed when I told the truth. Of course, I was not perfect, and my wrongs often made me want to be naughty at times, and of course, that was never overlooked. I often wonder now at the time and strength my step-mother spent on my wretched back. She seemed to be always angry and always screaming. I was kept thoroughly scared, fearing always what was going to happen next. I never knew what to do to please her.

It was really a very little thing that finally happened to free me from her. A neighbor, who had a good deal of curiosity, one day heard sounds of quarreling, beating and screams from what we called home, and afterwards waited for me down the street and began to ask questions. Although I didn't tell her anything, because I had learned when very small not to talk, my step-mother heard of the meeting and accused me of complaining. She seemed just crazy with anger

and grabbed me and took me to the cellar. There she beat me terribly with a trunk strap. At the end of this was a buckle which cut my back and arms. When she stopped I felt very weak. The only mercy she showed was to order me to bed when she finished. She told me I was to stay there without food for twenty-four hours. I lay there and suffered and brooded, and made up my mind that I must run away. If I stayed I felt I should go crazy.

Father returned from one of his business trips while I was still in bed, and when he saw my bruises was forced to believe that I was cruelly treated. He was so terribly angry that he could not speak, but he helped me to put on my clothes and pack my trunk. Then he took me to my dear grandmother from whom he had so long kept me, and begged her humbly to take charge of me.

My grandparents were just breaking up their little home and were leaving for the far West in a few days. It was arranged that I should go with them, and Father promised he would come out and see me soon. He came to the station to say "Good-by," looking so sad and careworn. I never saw him again. Nine months later he died very suddenly.

One morning I came to breakfast and told my grandparents that I had seen my father fall with a terrific crash right on his head. Later that morning came a telegram telling of his death, and afterwards we learned that he had died just exactly as I had described it to my grandparents before the news reached us.

The loss of my father made me very miserable. His letters were always so full of hope and promises for the future. My step-mother, who he had so fondly hoped would make a home for me, had disappeared

after we left her, and I have never heard of her since.

Violet had been with us a week when one day, while she was marketing in Stamford with D., she espied, in a toyshop window, what is known as a communication board. Violet said she had heard of such things, and thought she would like one to play with. Neither D. nor I ever thought of the contrivance as anything more serious than a plaything, run by the imagination and a little aid from the human hand. To the child's wide-eyed amazement, the little indicator began to have something to say almost as soon as the directions had been carefully read and fingers placed upon it. A friend who was stopping with us put her hands on the indicator at the same time with the child, making the first trial, and when D. saw it moving she thought the other was doing it for the mystification of the little girl, and could but admire her skill in duplicity. But when she asserted she had not in any way manipulated the indicator or even assisted it to move, D. became interested, and our investigations soon led us into fields where we had never hoped to tread—nay in whose existence we had never fully believed. Far more, a summer which had begun in grief and emptiness and the longing that hopes not for fulfillment grew into one of such happiness as we did not dream would be ours again; for Louise spent the season with us in the tiny camp, talked with us daily, and through various means of communication made herself a real part of our life.

THE STRANGE SUMMER BEGINS



CHAPTER V

THE STRANGE SUMMER BEGINS

IF the only evidence available were the working of a tiny table on a board, it would be next to impossible to persuade a person of intelligence and sophistication that communication with those that have gone is possible. The chances for trickery are too many and faith in human nature is too small. A practical joker can, with little practice, deceive the unwary; and for my part I never regarded the thing as anything more than a toy until the messages purporting to come through it had been fortified by evidence of a totally different and more convincing character.

Before the emotions aroused by the Great War caused a general awakening of interest in the possibility of getting into some sort of touch with those who, according to the teachings of the materialists, had suddenly quit this life and vanished into an oblivion from which there was no return, I believe that, with the exception of certain scientific investigators, only the naturally superstitious looked upon the talking board as anything more than a plaything. Those gullible souls who took it seriously for the most part regarded it as a sort of oracle, to be asked questions about the future—the stock market, investments, the possibility of acquiring riches, and, in many cases, the date of one's death. This was illustrated forcibly to me one day when D. had some little Italian children

over for a visit. They discovered our communication board and began to play with it. The first question propounded was:

"Weejyweejywhen'migointodie?" which, being interpreted, was, "Ouija, Ouija, when am I going to die?"

Of course, there is no such person or spiritual agent as "Ouija." The name is merely a combination of the French "oui" with the German "ja," and the term means simply, "Yes, yes."

After watching Violet and D. using the board for several evenings, I came to the conclusion that the child was perfectly innocent of any intent to deceive us; and, of course, I was as sure of my wife's honesty as of my own, and when I took the board with Violet, the indicator moved as freely as when D. sat with the child. I could feel the little instrument vibrate as if charged with an electric current, and I believed, for a time, that Violet must have some strong magnetic power that we lacked, for with D. and myself only, the indicator would not budge, and stood as if dead. Naturally I had studied psychology, and I fancy my long experience as a teacher and newspaper man revealed facts about the subject in practice that most theorists do not emphasize. My conviction for some days was that, as Violet could not possibly have known even the trifling little things which were so evidential of Louise, some of these might have been communicated from our subconsciousness to that of the child. And yet, the answers to our questions were so frequently exactly the opposite of what we could have expected, and so completely out of the knowledge and even the vocabulary of Violet that my theory of subconsciousness had to be abandoned.

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Perhaps it was partly because of my continued skepticism that a demand early came through the board that we use a table. To me, looking back over the events of the summer just gone, it seems as if the whole course of our experience followed a plan previously laid down by Louise or by agents coöperating with her, for the story unfolded was progressive as the various means of communication were progressive. One may doubt the origin of messages spelled out on a board or written by a pencil in the hands of a human being; but when an object without visible or discoverable motive power appears to lift itself, and actually rises in the air, only a simpleton could explain such an occurrence by "subconsciousness" or any agency known to the human senses. The law of gravitation is too well established. My own doubts as to the extra-physical origin of what we were experiencing lingered until I had seen the principle of gravitation defied and made sport of, and had felt an opposition of strong force against my own muscular efforts. Not until then was I ready to admit the possibility that spirit messages may actually come to us, and to believe that what had been spelled out on the cheap, commercial toy we had been using were actually messages from Louise.

On my first visit to the professional medium, last winter, a message purporting to come directly from Louise had urged me to write all that I should see and hear. However, it had fallen upon the ears of a very busy man, and so far I had seen or heard nothing that I believed would be of interest beyond the circle of those who had known Louise and us. Reportorial habit had compelled me to take notes. What I am now writing is the result of repetitions of the request from Louise during the summer, backed up by the expressed

desire of those who helped her in establishing to us the reality of her presence with us. This chronicle I am not setting down in a solemn frame of mind. It abounds in trivialities; but to us these supplied evidence and assurance that formal or oracular messages could not have given. Louise was seldom solemn, and what has been revealed to us shows many of the traits that so endeared her not only to us but to a wide circle of friends that enjoyed those brief years of her infancy, girlhood and young womanhood.

I did not treat the new toy seriously at first, as has been told. Neither D. nor I had any magnetic or psychical power whatsoever, and I paid no attention to it until I went home from town on the evening of July 18, to find my wife and Violet in a state of considerable excitement. They told of a long experience they had had that afternoon with the board, and how some one that to the mother identified herself as Louise had given many characteristic messages. Nobody had made any record. It was not until Sunday, two days later, that I decided to try the thing for myself.

Of course, I discovered immediately that the motive power was furnished in some way by Violet. None of us could do anything with the indicator except when she put a finger upon it, when it would fly about from letter to letter as if some strong, intelligent force were pushing or pulling it as it willed.

The conversation we had that Sunday I took down word for word, and I am going to set it down just as I wrote it.

D. asked: "Is there any one here?"

Immediately the indicator shot across the board to "Yes," and then this dialogue ensued:

"It is Louise, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"How long after you passed over did you realize you were in another world?"

"Five minutes."

"Did you realize at once what had happened?"

"Yes."

"Were you happy about it?"

"Yes."

"Did any one you know meet you on the other side?"

"Yes; Grandpa, Father and Uncle Edward."

"How long was it before you saw Archie?"

This was an uncle who was killed when a boy by being thrown from a horse.

"About one-half hour," was the reply to D.'s question.

"Had he grown to be a man?"

"Yes."

"How long before you became accustomed to new conditions?"

"One-half day."

"You were more or less prepared before you left?"

"No."

"Had not you been thinking about these things?"

"A little."

A little later D. said, "We are going to dinner."

"Put a place for me," the indicator spelled.

"Where?"

"Between you and Brother. I will come after lunch. Good-by."

After our midday dinner we resumed.

"Are you here, Louise?"

"Yes."

"Do you think the empty chair at the table was a success?"

"Yes."

"Don't you think it made us all a little depressed?"

"Yes."

"Then why did you wish to do it?"

"I don't want to be left out."

"Cannot you come and perch on Mother's shoulder just as well?"

"I don't know—yes."

"It makes me sad to see the empty chair."

"It wasn't empty."

"Have you anything to say about dinner to-day?"

"Yes, it tasted very good. Henriette is a good cook."

"What did we do when Mrs. Blank was here?"

The board spelled out, "Motored, talked, ate"—and there was a pause—"drank."

As was our custom on Sundays, while it was still possible, we had had wine with our dinner.

"Do you think we would be better off if we did not drink at all?" D. asked.

(Decidedly) "Yes."

"But Prohibition has come in, and we won't have anything very much longer."

The table spelled out: "You've got a lot."

"Where is it?"

"Home."

"Whereabouts at home?"

The board spelled "L-a-b."

Our small store was really in a room in our apartment we called the "laboratory," but which Louise always referred to as "the lab." Violet knew nothing

of this. As a matter of fact she had not even seen our apartment in New York.

"Do you remember the name of Brother's Y.D. (Yankee Division) friend you said had 'come over' recently?"

"Edward Lind."

This will be explained later.

I asked, "Don't you think Mother worries too much?"

"Yes."

"You must help her to stop worrying."

"Yes."

"What can you do for me?" D. asked.

The indicator spelled out: "Impress it upon your mind that I am here."

"But people are skeptical."

"Yes."

Louise had said that the little dogs she had had when a child, Biddy, an Irish terrier, and Chico, a Maltese terrier, were with her all the time. She said that pets that one has loved during this life, and desires in the future life, attend one.

"Do Biddy and Chico follow you?" asked D.

"No."

"Do they walk by your side?"

"Yes—sometimes."

"Do you think you can ever do automatic writing?"

"Yes, and no." Then "Yes" was repeated followed by "In time."

"Can you do automatic writing now?"

"I don't know."

"Do you know how I should prepare for automatic writing?"

"Don't know."

"Would it be good to stay for a long time concentrating with a pencil in one's hand?"

"Yes."

"Do you remember a little name you used to call me when you wrote me sometimes?"

"'Dear Mummy.'"

Violet did not know this.

"There was another name you used. Don't you remember?"

"It is very hard to remember names."

We had expected a great friend of Louise's, now married, to come over that evening, but he telephoned just then that he could not come because his wife had left him to mind the babies.

D. said: "Robert cannot come over to talk with you. What has he got to do?"

"Nurse!"

The next evening, after answering a few questions, the indicator began gyrating violently on the board.

"Why do you do that?"

"To get it off the sticky place."

"Where is the sticky place?"

"Different places."

"Is it due to the weather?"

"I don't know."

The indicator now manifested great activity.

"Can you do a figure '8,' as in skating?"

Immediately the indicator described an "8."

"You dance, don't you?"

"Yes."

"What else do you do for amusement?"

"Different things."

"Do you sing a great deal?"

"Yes."

"You told me to-day your music had put you in select company."

"Yes."

"What great composers' works are you familiar with there?"

The indicator spelled, "Mendelssohn."

At this point, Henriette, the maid, who was very skeptical, came out on the porch and sat down. The indicator would not work while she was there. Finally it said that it wanted Henriette to go away, and she was sent on an errand.

"Do you know the work of any other great composer?"

The indicator spelled, "Heller."

"Did not he write beautiful exercises?"

"Yes, and compositions."

"Can you think of any special composition of his?"

The indicator spelled "'Dance of'—no, 'Flower Dance.'"

Later we found out that Louise had not written this last sentence. This will be explained further on.

At some of our later questions the indicator glided so frequently to the little "isle of safety" as D. had named the "I don't know" at the top of the board that she protested. The indicator spelled out, "You'll know enough, little by little. All knowledge doesn't come at once. It may take years, years, years."

"But 'Raymond' has told a great deal about conditions in your world."

"Yes. A little at a time. Not all at once."

"Tell us some little thing to put in the book that will make people happier."

"I just want a subject to speak on."

"Are Christianity and Judaism reconciled on the other side?"

"To a certain extent. There are many Jewish people that have received more light than Christians."

"About the Divinity of Christ: Christianity holds that He is the Son of God. Can you say whether this belief is true?"

"Yes. That belief is correct."

"Do you mean by that Christ was Godlike?"

"No, He was really the Son of God."

"Then the Immaculate Conception is not merely a religious tenet?"

"No, an absolute fact."

"Are religious sects more or less obliterated in the other life?"

"This is enough for to-night. Good-by."

THROUGH THE BOARD

CHAPTER VI

THROUGH THE BOARD

THE following evening, the indicator started working as soon as Violet and D. put their fingers upon it.

"Last night some one said that Heller wrote the 'Flower Dance,' " it spelled.

"Didn't you tell us that?" D. asked.

"No. He wrote 'Cradle Song,' 'Barcarolle,' 'Avalanche.' "

None of us knew Heller as the composer of these works. Later on D. went to a music store, verified their authorship and bought the compositions.

"Is there danger always of some one else coming into our conversation?"

"Yes."

"Can you give us a sort of signature which will be your guarantee?"

"Yes. I will write 'Z' before answers of importance. 'Z' is a letter not used much."

"What is Daddy doing now?"

"Recording."

"Mother wrote down what you said last night."

"If you had only written it from the beginning! Please ask all those questions over again and write them down—I mean the day you asked the most."

This was the Friday before, the 18th, when the board was used for the first time.

"What message was it you had for Brother?"

" 'Your Y.D. soldier friend is here.' "

"What is his name?"

"Edward Lind."

"When did he come over?"

"The other day."

"How do you know he was Brother's friend?"

"Just met him."

"When did Brother meet this boy?"

"November. France."

"Do you know the name of the place?"

"No."

Our son, when asked later, upon his return from town, remembered that during November, 1918, after the Armistice, he had really met, in the 26th Division, a young man whose last name was Lind, but he could not recall his first name. The inference was that Lind had died within the last few days. We have not received any answer from the War Department to a request for information about young Lind.

The indicator resumed:

"Mummy, just ask questions like those you asked at first; just as though we had never talked together since I went over."

"Why?"

"Easier."

"Are you always here with us?"

"Yes."

"Don't you take little trips around the earth sometimes?"

"Yes, but that doesn't take much time."

"Have you gone to Italy yet?"

"Yes; I was in Rome."

"Was there anything you saw you liked?"

"The art galleries and the Cathedral."

"What was the name of the Cathedral?"

"St. Peter's."

"Do you remember what it was of yours you told mother the other day to wear?"

"Yes; bathrobe."

"What was it you said you did not care about?"

"Furs."

"Don't you have furs for ornaments over there?"

"No, we don't kill our pets."

Now I am aware that much of what I recorded in those first sittings with the board was trivial, but to us who knew Louise it was all evidential, especially when considered in the light of what came later on. Still, from now on I shall omit a great deal as being of a particularly intimate nature—the sort of playful chatter and chaff that obtains in a happy family, and which, possibly, would not interest those who, insisting upon the sterner realities, have no ear and heart for the little nonsenses that to some make life really endurable.

"You said the other day you wear white and blue. Why is it?" asked D.

"It is because they are the most beautiful colors. Almost everybody here wears blue and white."

"How long after you passed over was it before you realized something had happened to you?"

"I told you."

"Don't you want to tell again?"

"No."

"Why do you wear white and blue?"

"White is symbolic of purity; blue, the endless sky, symbolic of eternity."

"Don't you think the War opened up our vision with regard to the Great Beyond?"

"Yes. The War was, in a way, a blessing."

"Is it felt in the spirit world that a benefit to humanity in general will result?"

"Yes, in a way."

Louise spoke of visiting the Peace Conference and discussed one or two personalities there in a humorous way; but what she said it might be inadvisable to repeat.

"What did you think of the Germans there?" we asked.

Laughter from the board.

"Were you glad to see them defeated?"

"No. They are all human beings."

"I thought you were all for the Allies."

"No, their spirits (the Germans) are just as good as, and better than some of the Allies."

"Still, you would not like to have seen the Germans win?"

The indicator went to neutral.

"Do you think the Allies were as much to blame as the Germans?"

"It wasn't the Germans' fault."

"Whose fault was it?"

"Anti-Christ's."

"Whom do you mean—the Kaiser?"

"Anti-Christ used the Kaiser to bring about the War. The Kaiser was his instrument."

"Do you mean by 'Anti-Christ' what we would call evil spirits?"

"Satan."

"Do you think the Kaiser ought to be punished?"

"It wasn't his fault. He was simply possessed."

"Are Senators who are opposing President Wilson with regard to the Peace Treaty acting from patriotism or partisanship?"

The indicator spelled out "P-a," which might be the beginning of either word, and then flew to the neutral point.

"Don't you want to say?"

"No."

"We won't tell the Senators."

"You would if you published it."

"Will you tell us when you think we have enough to make a book?"

"Yes. Of course, you will make it like a story."

"We thought of writing the story of Louise, and calling it simply 'Louise,'" I suggested.

"No!"

"Would you rather we call it some other name?"

"Yes—'Revelations of Louise.'"

She went on to say, in answer to questions, that, as some have theorized, the Great War was a fulfillment of one of the prophecies of St. John the Divine; but that it was not the Kaiser who was the "Beast," as some writers have asserted, but "Anti-Christ."

"Lots of people believe in a personal devil," it was suggested. "Is there such a thing?"

"The Evil Spirit."

"Where did Mother like to kiss you?"

"Back of my neck."

This was true.

"I'd give a great deal to be able to kiss you there now."

"Yes; I can kiss you, but you can't kiss me till you come over."

After some further conversation, the indicator suddenly said "Good-by!"

"Is it that you are tired of us?"

"No, it is after 11."

We left the porch, where we had been sitting, went into the house, and discovered it was just 11:02.

Y
SPIRIT DOGS, AND ANOTHER



CHAPTER VII

SPIRIT DOGS, AND ANOTHER

FOR the sitting the next afternoon, we had procured a new board, larger than the old, but at first did not get results. However, in two or three minutes it seemed to work as easily as the other. D. asked questions.

"Where was I to-day?"

"In New York."

"Did you see Daddy?"

"Yes."

"Where?"

"Taking lunch with Mummy."

"Were you with Violet and me at the theater?"

"Yes."

"What did you think of the show?"

"The girls did not wear enough clothes."

"In which act?"

"In the second."

"Did you disapprove?"

"Yes."

"But Mother wears low-neck frocks."

"It is not that."

"Did you think that it was immodest?"

"Yes."

Louise said she thought the play was vulgar.

"But did you not think the sanctimonious young man rather funny?"

"No, silly."

"Give us the pass word." The indicator immediately flew to "Z."

"Will you go to some nice plays with us?"

"I hope so. I like to see a good, good, good play."

"Did you think Mother was nervous at the theater to-day?"

"Yes."

"What did I do?"

"Went out." (This was true.)

"Do you remember what you wrote last night at the end?"

"Yes." Then she repeated, "'It is after 11. Good-by.'"

"Are our chairs your shade of blue?"

"No, ours is 'sky.'"

"But the sky varies."

"Pale blue. Like the sky now."

"Is your dress white, picked out with blue?" guessed D.

"Yes."

"How do you wear your hair?"

"Same. Mummy and Daddy," she went on, "when you write my book, are you going to put my picture in it?"

"We thought of putting several pictures of you in it. You approve of that, don't you?"

"Yes—put the picture of me in my evening gown."

Louise in further discussion of the book at this time, insisted upon the pictures of various members of the family being used, but later she was induced to change her mind.

"Which other pictures of you?" we asked.

"The enlargement of me sitting on the steps."

"You mean the Kodak that was taken by H. C.?"

"Yes."

Violet, I may say, knew nothing about this picture, a snapshot of Louise, taken on the steps of our country home.

There was some conversation about the pet "spirit" dogs. Louise told us that Chico and Biddy were both with her, and that for collars both wore symbolic colors about their necks. The colors she gave as blue and pink.

We asked when we should have enough materials for the book. The answer came, "When you get this tablet filled, you will have enough for the book. Then you can begin another. Of course, you will have to explain everything."

"Can you say some little characteristic thing to Mother, something that would be evidential of you?"

The answer came, "Z."

"Call me some little pet name you used to call me."

The indicator wrote, "Roseleaf."

This was the pet name that Louise always used in her letters to her mother. Violet had never heard of it.

"Are the great poems of literature remembered where you are—Gray's 'Elegy,' for instance?"

"Yes."

"Have you greater poems over there?"

"Yes."

"Many hold that all great poetry is inspirational."

"Yes." (Very decidedly.)

"Did Shakespeare write his plays solely from his own mind, or was he inspired?"

"Inspired."

"You don't think Bacon had anything to do with it?"

"No."

"Are there racial distinctions with regard to color in your plane?"

"No; it is all the same."

After some more conversation, the indicator wrote, "Good-by!"

"Why did you say good-by?"

"You are tired."

"Tell me what time it is."

"Ten, almost."

"Which clock did you see?" Laughter from the indicator.

"Brother's watch."

Her brother wore his army wrist watch with an illuminated dial.

He was in an adjoining room. We called out to him to ask what was the time. He replied, "Just one minute of 10."

In the afternoon of the following day, her brother and Violet were invited by Louise to play a game on the board.

"You see how long you can keep your hand on the indicator," she spelled out. "I'll bet I can throw you and little sister off each four times in five minutes."

The game was on and the indicator began to jerk from side to side, with the result that our son's hand was thrown off four times and Violet's five times within the five minutes.

In the evening, when the board had been taken out, D. said, "I heard there was a 'rough-house' here to-day."

"Yes, we had lots of fun," spelled the indicator.

"What did you do?"

"Played a game."

"Let's play it now."

More of the same "rough-house" followed.

"What did Mother do in town to-day?"

"Shopping."

"Do you think Violet would make a success on the stage?"

"Yes."

"How will she begin—dancing?"

"Yes, and elocution."

"What definition can you give of 'elocution'?"

"Expression."

It soon developed that Louise was in a merry mood. She said on the board; "I want to dance."

"What?"

"One-step."

"What shall we play?"

"'Oui, Oui, Marie.' "

This was played and the indicator kept step to it and made flourishes that were similar to the turns in a one-step.

"What do you want next?"

"Fox trot."

"Will you dance Daddy's old fox trot?"

"Yes."

Some years ago I learned a peculiar sort of fox trot, easy to do, but I had to teach it to almost every dancing partner, and found it helped to count aloud while taking the steps. The indicator paused successively on 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. Then it skipped to, 2, 3, 1, 2, 3, making "dips" as Louise and I used to make them. Her imitation of my methodical manner of fox-trotting seemed to amuse the family very much.

"What next?"

"Waltz."

A record was put on the machine. The indicator spelled out, "Not that one—the one you played this afternoon." It danced through the waltz, "hesitating" and "twinkling" in the fashion of five or six years ago; cantered, and so on.

"Now, the way the Germans waltz," suggested some one. The indicator wheeled slowly, ponderously, round and round.

"What next?" we asked.

"Maxixe."

This has been a favorite dance of Louise's. The indicator heeled and toed the whole length of the board, then it glided to the sides. It went through a performance that was an exact reproduction so far as possible of the dance the Castles made famous. Then it demanded the "tango," and danced that.

Violet knew nothing of any of these dances, except that she had just begun to learn the one-step.

I had constructed a planchette and Louise agreed to try it, but she was not sure she could communicate with it.

"Now see," said D., "if you can write 'Louise Crockett' the way you used to write it?" The planchette wrote, back-hand, in Louise's familiar way, in large letters, "Louise Crockett." Soon it was writing easily.

"What were the names Brother used to call you when you both were kiddies?"

The pencil wrote: "Louse" (dropping the "i"); "Skinnay" (accent on the last syllable). These were two of her brother's nicknames for her in childhood, and Violet had never heard them.

"What did you call Mummy?"

"Roseleaf."

"What did Daddy call me?" asked D.

The indicator spelled correctly the three unusual pet names. Violet had not known them.

"Go back and cross that 't'" D. directed. The pencil went back and did as it was told.

"What did you used to call Brother?"

"'Newky.'"

"What did you think of that experiment?"

"Hard."

"If two of us hold the pencil in our fingers lightly, could you do anything with it?"

"Yes." (Not very decidedly.)

Then our son and the indicator played a game of "tag," the latter displaying every evidence of being under full control. This occupied some time, the indicator acting as if thoroughly enjoying it. Suddenly it started in my direction.

"You want to go to Daddy?"

"Yes." The indicator suddenly shot from under the hands upon it, across a space of two feet, and into my lap.

"What did Mother do while in bathing to-day?"

"Went beyond your depth."

This was not exactly true, but D. had sat in the water, so that the latter came up to her ears.

"What did Violet do?"

"Harry."

"Harry" was the name of a little son of a neighbor, who had taken Violet canoeing.

"What did she do with Harry?"

"Canoe."

Harry is a Boy Scout.

"What good deed does Harry do every day?"

"Brings your milk."

"Do you ever see his mother come with the milk?"

"Yes."

"What follows her when she comes?"

The indicator spelled, "Dcoagt." We could not make this out at first and asked, "Are those letters abbreviations?"

"No, try every other letter."

We did that and found the seemingly unintelligible word was composed of "dog" and "cat." We had never seen the cat, but found that she really did accompany the dog sometimes.

Violet was wearing something wrapped about her head.

"What does she look like?" D. asked.

The indicator spelled "Turk—Fatima."

"Did anybody ever call you that?"

The board said "Yes," and sped directly toward our son, who was standing near.

Then came a curious demonstration. The whining of a dog was heard outside and the nose of a great Russian wolfhound belonging to a neighbor appeared, pressed against the screen wire.

"What is that?" was asked.

"Rex," was spelled by the indicator.

"Do you want Rex to come in?"

"Yes."

"Do you remember Rex?"

"Yes."

The door was opened and immediately the dog rushed in upon the porch, and into the house; then he turned around madly, came back, burst open the door and hurried away. We could not account for his performance, so we asked the question:

"What did you think of Rex's behavior?"

"He saw me."

"Did that scare him?"

"Yes."

"Why?"

"He did not know me."

"But Rex does know you?"

"Yes."

"Are dogs able to see spirits and we not?"

"Yes."

"Do horses have clairvoyance too?"

"Yes."

Rex came back to the door again and whined.

Louise wrote, "Let him in."

He went over to the couch on one side of the porch and began to bark, and then whined again. Suddenly he quieted down. The indicator wrote, "I am petting him." Rex sat looking at the door and the indicator wrote, "I am here, Rex."

The dog lay down upon the floor, silent; after a moment he raised his head and looked as if at some small object near him. Then he turned, lifting his head higher, as if toward another object, a little taller. The pencil wrote: "He sees Biddy and Chico."

"Why is Rex panting so?"

"Excited."

"Do you think Rex knew you this time?"

"Yes."

"What was he barking for?"

"Me."

"Was that his greeting?"

"Yes."

Rex gave a sudden yelp and drew back. We asked, "Did Biddy bite him?"

The answer came, "No—touched him."

"What time is it?"

"10:04, 5, 6, 7 and 8."

We found that the clocks and watches in the house each recorded a different time and that Louise had apparently read them all.

FESTIVAL OF SPIRITS; WRITING

CHAPTER VIII

THE FESTIVAL OF SPIRITS; WRITING

THE next afternoon, referring to the conversation of the evening before, D. said:

"Tell me what you think of Rex."

"Rex is a nice dog."

"Is Rex psychic?"

"All animals are."

"Where do you spend the nights?"

"Here, in this house."

"Don't you ever leave it?"

"Yes, just as you leave it."

Whenever there was a pause in the conversation, the indicator spelled out, "Qu," which Louise used as the abbreviation for "question."

She said she wanted to dance.

"What?"

"Fox trot."

After the indicator had done some dancing, Violet started on the phonograph, "The Star-Spangled Banner," playing it very slowly.

"Do you know what that is?"

"Yes; 'The Star-Spangled Banner.' Play it faster."

The phonograph was readjusted.

"That is too fast," said the indicator. The machine was slowed down.

"That is fine."

The indicator went through the motions of a grand opera singer rendering our national song with *empressment*. Next a Hawaiian melody was played, and the indicator began a veritable wriggle.

"Now what are you dancing?"

"The Hula Hula."

We asked whether Louise had read certain psychical books. She said she had, pronouncing one "uninteresting," and another "dull."

She mentioned a book that D. had started reading the night before, and said that she liked it.

"When did you read it?"

"Last night. I finished it while you all slept."

"How does it end?"

"With a poem." D. had not got to the end of the book, and I had not even seen the volume. We looked it up, and sure enough the book does end with a poem.

The indicator wrote: "I am dressed in white to-day. Do you want to know what we are doing?"

"Yes."

"This is the Festival of Spirits."

"Have we anything that corresponds to it?"

"Yes; New Year's, in a way. Not exactly the same signification. It is symbolic. To-day, I have taken a step higher—nearer the spirit of All Holiness."

"Can you afford to give us so much time to-day?"

"Not very well."

"Shall we stop?"

"Yes, good-by."

But another force apparently took hold of the indicator, for when Violet asked, "Is there any one here?" the reply came: "Yes, dear Daughter, do not detain me, for to-day I advance one step nearer God."

D. asked, "Is this my father, or Violet's father?"

"Violet's. Your father is far up."

"He must be very high. He was such a good man."

"Yes, he is very near God."

"Is that the reason why he does not come to me more often?"

"Yes."

"Can he speak to me on the board?"

"No. He is too far."

Violet asked, "Is Mother here, too?"

"Yes, she is five steps higher than I. I hear you are thinking of making an actress of Violet," her father (Morton) said to D.

"Yes, but we won't if you don't approve."

"I am very much for it. I would have done the same had I lived."

"Do you think she would make a good actress?"

"Yes."

"How do you think it is best to begin—with dancing?"

"Yes."

"And, a little later, elocution?"

"Yes."

"We are giving her music."

"I am so glad. One question, please. When do you intend to start her on the stage?"

"We were thinking of when she was about sixteen or seventeen. Of course, she must get her education first; that is the most important thing, isn't it?"

"Yes; and you will look after her?"

"Yes. You were a man of high ambitions and a good mind, and could have won a high position," observed D. "What spoiled all your plans?"

"Whiskey. Never let the children get the drinking habit. Good-by!"

Later on we asked Louise for more information about "The Festival of Spirits." She told us that there were three days each year when the spirits that progress are promoted one step nearer Heaven. One was July 25, which she had named, another November 2, which we identified as All Souls' Day in the Church Calendar. The third, or rather the first in time, was February 13. The names of these other days she did not give us. She had taken her first step upward on February 13.

After dinner we called through the board for Louise, but there was no answer.

"Are there any spirits present?"

There was still no answer, and we repeated the question. Still there was a delay of some seconds before the indicator slowly moved to "Yes."

"Who is it?"

"Louise."

Then the indicator shot over to "Z," the signature Louise used for identification.

"Were you pretending at first you were not here just now?"

"No; I had to come," meaning that she had been some distance away.

"Did you see Daddy write with the planchette to-night?" D. asked. Neither D. nor Violet had seen what I wrote.

"Yes."

"Repeat what he wrote."

The pencil wrote, "Louise, are you here?"

That was quite correct.

"Was anybody trying to guide Daddy's hand?"

"Yes, I."

"Do you think if Mother took a pencil in her hand and Violet put her fingers above Mother's, you could write?"

"I don't know."

The pencil was taken up in this fashion.

"Now," said D., "see if you can write your name the way you used?"

After a slight pause the pencil wrote, slowly: "Louise Crockett."

We tried some more experiments along this line, and the ensuing answers in this conversation were written by the pencil.

"How was the Festival to-day?"

"Fine."

"Have you division of time like ours—twenty-four hours to a day, etc.?"

"No."

"Do you have day and night?"

"No."

"Are you still all dressed in white, with no blue?"

"Yes."

"When do you put on blue again?"

"Two days."

"What are your days, if not twenty-four hours?"

"I was speaking in your time."

I had now ruled a large sheet of paper, and D. asked:

"Does it help you to have the lines?"

"Yes."

"You"—the pencil was lifted and pointed straight at D.; then it wrote, "you hold the pencil too tightly."

A moment later, when D. had relaxed her hold on the pencil: "Too loosely." The pencil was lifted

again. This was clear levitation. Frequently, later on, she would write a whole sentence, then reverse the pencil and erase every word.

Louise used to be very fond of adorning her letters with funny little caricatures and faces. Violet had known nothing of this.

"Make one of the funny little faces," suggested D.

Immediately the pencil drew one of the familiar caricatures.

"How did you like the experiment of writing with a pencil?" asked D., taking up the communication board.

"Hard. Let us write some more."

We had filled two large sheets of paper and I numbered the first "No. 1" and the second "No. 2." Neither D. nor Isabel saw me do this. The first thing the pencil did was to write at the middle of the top of the clean sheet I had just ruled, "No. 3." Then it continued, "Father is here; wants to write."

Then came this as if from Morton: "This is Father." The point of the pencil was carried up by some unseen force to Violet's lips.

"Was that a kiss?" D. asked.

"Yes; good-by."

"Is that the first automatic writing you have done?"

The pencil was lifted and pointed at the "Yes" which had just been written.

"Can you do automatic writing with Violet's hand on the pencil?"

"I don't know. Good-by."

We resumed: "Are you here, Louise?"

Immediately the pencil began to draw a caricature of a woman in evening dress. It was very elaborately done, and in a style peculiarly Louise's, which while

it seldom produced likenesses, always portrayed characteristics of the subject. Louise labeled it, "Mother."

"You ought to make a *fac-smile*," Isabel said.

"What did Violet say?" asked D.

"*Fac-smile*," wrote the indicator, just as the child had pronounced it.

"What should she have said?"

"*Fac-simile*."

"When do you think Daddy ought to start writing the book?"

"Now. Begin the book to-night and I will help."

THE TABLE THAT TALKED



CHAPTER IX

THE TABLE THAT TALKED

AS has been told, I began to take an active interest in the board on Sunday, July 20. That interest was increasing, but not forcing me into the conviction that we were in communication with our daughter, much as I would have liked to believe that such was the case. My theory of our own subconscious influence on Violet was not borne out by the evidential characteristics of the messages that purported to come from Louise as we progressed. I could not explain; I could only wonder, and hope for a solution of what seemed unexplainable. It began to come before our experiences had continued a week, when through the board came a demand that we try "tipping table."

Now during the winter D. and I had frequently tried to have a table tip for us. Many an evening we had sat for half an hour or more at a time, with our hands resting upon a table or a wooden stool, occasionally addressing a question or an entreaty to the seemingly empty air, but nothing had happened, and I had grown firmer in my conviction that the exhibition I had seen when the professional medium had made a little table tip at will had been faked for my benefit. But as we progressed with automatic writing, I felt encouraged to try again. I was not prepared to accept

mere tilting as the proof I wanted, but it would be more convincing than the board.

We got results with the table as soon as we tried it with Violet. That was on the Friday evening of the first week, or July 25. I had fashioned out of remnants of board, a little table about thirteen inches square on top, with slender legs two and a half feet high, the whole weighing less than three pounds. We had been talking on the board about the "Festival of Spirits," and our tests with automatic writing had been so encouraging that I asked if Louise would try to tip the little contrivance I had made. Assent was signified, and then followed what to us seemed a remarkable demonstration. None of us had ever seen such an exhibition. In addition to tipping in answer to questions, the table moved along the floor, as if walking, went out on the porch and bumped against the screen door opening upon the lawn.

The next night began the series of table-tippings and levitations that made our summer really remarkable, and that led to our receiving what to us was absolute proof of the life hereafter and confirmation of much that men wiser than their generations have maintained through centuries of doubt. It was not until I had seen and heard things that no mere psychologist can explain away and no theory of subconsciousness can account for that I was willing to accept as authentic what we had been told on the communication board. Having been forced, as it were, into a belief that those who have gone can still communicate with us, and can convince us that their real personalities are present with us, I must believe that what we were told on the board is just as much a part of the whole story as what follows.

We did not make our first important experiment with the little table I had constructed, but with a rather heavy oak table, having an octagonal top, supported by three outspread legs.

The "spirit" code of one tip for "no"; two for "I don't know", or, "I cannot answer"; three for "Yes" and four for "Repeat the alphabet" was used. Now follows what actually happened after D., Margaret, a friend just back from doing Red Cross work in France, Violet, our son and I had seated ourselves about the table.

First we asked: "Is anybody here?"

In three decided tilts, the answer came, "Yes."

"Is it Louise?"

"Yes."

"Anybody with you?"

"Yes."

"How many?"

"Two."

"Who are they?"

"Father."

"Who is the other?"

The table spelled out, by tipping, the name of a distant relative of the children, whom I shall identify here and hereafter as "Julius." They had never known him, but I had. He had died some months before, following the death of his son, whom I shall call "Gordon." Julius was a very forceful man, and to us the table seemed to take on a share of his personality, for as it spelled his name it fairly banged out the letters.

"Is he here because of the relationship?"

"Yes."

So we turned to the communication board, and asked of Julius:

"Do you wish to give us a message?"

"Yes."

Then the indicator spelled out the following: "I never had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of either——(naming our son)——or Violet, but I would like to, now."

"Can you tell me what the relationship is between you and these two children?"

"Fourth cousins." This was correct.

Then the indicator continued: "Have you any questions?"

We asked: "Can you give us your opinion as to whether the Treaty of Peace and the League of Nations should be ratified by the Senate?"

The indicator immediately went to a neutral point.

"Ought there to be reservations?" we pursued.

Slowly came the answer, "Yes."

Then the indicator resumed:

"Tell——(naming his wife)——not to mourn. I am with her now, and more than ever in life."

"Would you like her to communicate with you?"

"Yes."

"We will see that she gets your message."

"Thank you; good-by."

Then the board spelled out, "Hello!"

"Who is here now?"

"Guides. We want every one in this house to tip table. Dark preferred. No light."

"Will this table be all right?" we asked, indicating the octagonal one.

"Any table. Wait till it is dark."

"How many of us do you expect to be at this table?"

"Six."

"Shall we talk with the board until it gets dark?"

"Nothing."

At dark we resumed—D., Violet, Margaret, our son, Henriette, our Belgian maid, and I. A thunderstorm had come almost coincidentally with the first part of the seance, and there was heavy rain—supposed to make conditions favorable. The table began tipping immediately after I turned out the light.

"Who is here?" asked Isabel.

"Louise, Father, 'Julius.'"

"Are there any others?"

"No."

The table began to give evidence of power, which grew into terrific force as the sitting proceeded. We had our hands lightly on its top, palms down, but after a series of tippings and levitations the table began climbing into Violet's lap and then shoved violently against each of us in turn. In answer to questions, it came out that three of us possessed magnetic power—Violet, very strong; Henriette, in less degree, and Margaret, slight.

When I said I would surely communicate the message to Julius' widow the table rocked violently, as if with pleasure.

Then came an extraordinary exhibition of supernatural control. The table was made to run from one side of the circle to another and to climb into our laps. It stood on one leg, jerked about violently and walked about the floor. Our son left the table but it continued its performances. I kept asking at intervals if more than the original three were present, and finally the answer came, "Yes—16."

These were listed as follows:

Five guides for Violet, three for Henriette, two for each of the remainder of us, together with Louise, Morton (Violet's father), and Julius. We were informed that the proximity of our home to the place where his own family lived had been instrumental in drawing "Julius" to us, joined with the relationship that existed between him and Louise, Morton, Violet and our son.

During these early experiments the table was never wholly elevated above the floor except with somebody's knee as a purchase. We tried the small table I had made, and it was lifted a foot from the floor without supports of any kind. We asked the spirits if they could materialize. They were not sure. We asked them to appear in the form of lights. In a few seconds Henriette claimed that she saw blue lights on D. and then Violet said she saw them. Both next said that the lights were on my hands. From them they went to Violet's. No one else saw them. Finally the table said "Good-night" by tipping toward each of us in turn. Not satisfied, it then walked across the room and knocked on the door of the room of our son, who had shut himself in, so that he could do some work at his desk.

The next morning, Sunday, I awoke at daybreak, and once awake was impelled to get up. The thought came to me that I must write out the message Julius had directed me to convey. It seemed as if some force drew me to the writing-desk, and I could not satisfy myself until I had written a letter and transmitted the word that purported to come from him. That afternoon I asked Louise, on the board, what had dragged me out of bed so early.

She spelled the real name of "Julius."

Later in the day my "guides" signified that they wished to talk to me. After some preliminary conversation, it developed that they wanted to discuss the book. This is what they spelled on the communication board:

"Make it as interesting as possible, putting it in story form. It must have a blue cover, bordered by white, and 'Revelations of Louise' must be printed in gold letters. Put in it the pictures Louise mentioned."

After some talk that was more strictly personal, they spelled out:

"As soon as it grows dark, allow no one to leave here until we say good-night."

ON GUIDES AND "POWER"



CHAPTER X

ON GUIDES AND "POWER"

HERE it seems fitting to repeat what we have been told about "guides." I do not remember to have seen anything printed on this subject, although I admit that I have not begun to cover the field of psychical literature. The subject seems to me interesting enough to have a chapter by itself, although it requires a departure from the strict narrative form of story, because the information was imparted to us at various times, as our acquaintance with our visitors from the other world proceeded.

We were told that to every child, at birth, is assigned at least two guides, whose duty is to watch over their charge, influence him as far as possible for good, and protect him from harm where it can be done. It appears, according to what has been told us, that while certain things are fore-ordained, to the individual is left the final responsibility for his own actions—in other words, he is actually a free moral agent.

As the child grows older, we have been told, these guides may give place to others, though it is not infrequent that a human being may have at least one guide continuously from birth until death. If the child has as many as three, it is apt to possess a degree of mediumistic power. Most children, we were assured,

have this power to some extent, but unless use is made of it, the power may, in time, depart. At least one of the guides remains with its charge all the time, and the day is divided into two watches.

The "identification" of their guides for close friends who came to see us during the summer proved an interesting and rather diverting pastime, and while not all believed that they were actually talking on the communication board or through the table with the more or less distinguished personage from the other world who was said to be the unseen party to the conversation, these friends at least were convinced that they were witnessing manifestations of some mysterious force. In all cases they left wondering; some of them sure, some of them shaking their heads at what they said they could not understand.

We first learned about guides while talking on the communication board, when one afternoon we asked who were present from the spirit world besides Louise. The answer came:

"John, Cecilia, Catherine, Isabella and Mary."

"And who are they?" we pursued.

"Violet's guides," was the reply.

Our son had a rather different experience with his guides from the rest of us. Through the board he learned that he had two guides and that their names were "Ed" and "Kirk." "Ed" lived, so he said, in the sixteenth century, in that part of England which is near Wales. He was something like a country gentleman, and evidently had a considerable sense of humor. "Kirk," on the other hand, was a carpenter, and he told that he had been born in Erie, in 1800; that at the age of twelve, both parents having died, he was sent by friends to Greenwich, Conn., and there

apprenticed to a carpenter. He died, he said, at the age of twenty-five, from typhoid fever. Ed was jovial from the first. He told us he had been a married man and while marriage wasn't always absolutely satisfactory, in the main it was "a good thing."

Revelation of the identity of my own guides came as a sort of shock to my strong pro-Ally sensibilities, for I was informed that both were Germans. Their names were given as "Albert" and "George." The former was identified as a soldier and George described himself as a Franciscan monk who had been pastor of a church in Cologne. However, there was a grain of comfort. Both said emphatically that they did not approve of the war, and that Germany was absolutely unjustified in waging it. Nevertheless, neither blamed the German people, but "Anti-Christ," acting through the Kaiser.

It has been very difficult to get a satisfactory conception as to what "mediumistic power" is. We were told that for want of a better term we could describe it as a sort of magnetism, but this does not seem adequate in view of the information imparted to us later; for in speaking of the use by spirits of a medium in a trance, the highest authority we have had told us that the spirits of many persons absolutely leave their bodies during sleep. Such persons are sound sleepers. According to this same authority, the spirit of such a sleeper goes to the spirit plane and there mingles with spirits who have gone on. There is left, however, a way back into the body. When the spirit returns to its earthly temple it is unable to communicate to the mind what it has seen and heard while on its journey. In a trance, the subject's spirit may leave the body and mingle with spirits, and the spirit who wishes to

communicate takes possession of the body and uses its vocal apparatus, and upon occasion, its muscular forces. The body without the spirit is an inert mass. When the subject awakes, he or she has no recollection whatever of what has happened.

MANIFESTATIONS



CHAPTER XI

MANIFESTATIONS

SEVERN sat at the table, the night following the visit of Julius. He was not among the unseen spectators at first, but later on when the question was put as to his presence, a vehement "Yes" followed. Four of our seven sitters were described as having "power."

The table behaved violently, jerking about with incredible force. So turbulent did it become that we cried, "Enough!" and asked to have some "manifestations" if possible. We were told to sit quietly.

After a few minutes, Violet gave a hysterical cry. She said she saw something like a formless shape on the other side of D. We turned on the lights. She insisted upon having the lights put out again, when similar things happened. We got up from the table, and consulted the communication board.

"You must go back," said Louise, and Violet again insisted that we do so. However, there followed more of the same nature as before and after a few moments we went back upon the porch again, and registered our protest on the board.

"What is the use of table-tipping?" we asked.

Louise replied, "It will lead to speech. You must sit every night."

"Would it be just as good sitting without Violet?"

"No."

"Would not Mrs. Blank do as well?"

"I would rather Violet."

"Yes, but it frightens her so much."

"It won't."

"Why is she frightened?"

Some one suggested it was the first appearance of the supernatural and the response came, "Yes."

"How can we influence Brother to be more sympathetic?"

"He is sympathetic, but does not want to believe."

"Why?"

"He thinks Violet influences all this, and won't be convinced to the contrary."

The pencil and paper were called for and a note was written by the pencil. It is worthy of remark that the pencil always wrote for the eyes of the person to whom the message was addressed, no matter on which side of the table he or she was sitting. I have seen it write in succession four messages, each to be read from a different angle. This message was to Violet:

"Dear little Sister:

"Do not be frightened. We would not hurt you."

Toward dusk the next day we took up the board and Louise signified her presence. I asked whether I should write the book alone, D. having said she had no time to give to it. Louise replied: "Mummy must write her share." We discussed the book at some length, and then she said she wanted to write. So a paper and pencil were brought and she again inscribed a note to Violet:

"Dear little Sister:

"To-night I am coming. You will see me. Do not be frightened.
XXX LOUISE XXX"

The "X's," in Louise's letters had always meant "kisses."

"Won't you write a note to Auntie—dear old Auntie who loved you so much?" asked D.

Immediately the direction of the pencil was reversed, and this letter written to Louise's great aunt, who was visiting relatives in Canada:

"Dear Auntie:

"I spoke to you through Mrs. S. If you will get a board it would give me great pleasure to write you. Love from

LOUISE."

"Auntie" had had one sitting with Mrs. S.

Later in the evening D. asked if a postscript could not be added to the letter, and this is what Louise wrote:

"P. S. I had a wonderfully good time to-night. Barrels of love and oceans of kisses. XXX LOUISE XXX"

Darkness came while this was going on. Suddenly the word "Table" was written on the paper, which we interpreted to mean that we should go inside and sit at the table.

"Henriette is not here. Would it make any difference if she does not come to the table?" D. asked.

Immediately the pencil wrote "Henriette."

The maid, however, was out of the house and we asked if we could not get along without her. The answer came, "Yes."

There were four of us about the table, Esther, a neighbor, D., Isabel and myself. Immediately after the lights were put out, the table began to throb with life. We were told that eleven spirits were present; Violet's five guides, two each for the rest of us, and in addition, Louise and Morton. Suddenly it was demanded from the table that we stop talking.

Almost immediately Violet said, "It is growing very dark." After a short interval: "I see a light, back there. It is coming nearer. It is on the table. No, it is beside you (indicating D.). Oh! such a beautiful face. It is like the picture on your dressing table. Is it Louise? Yes. She says, 'Yes.' She is putting her arm around you," she said to D.

Suddenly Violet's own arm was clasped about D. and she leaned over and kissed her very tenderly several times, just as Louise used to do.

"I feel as if Louise were really doing this herself," murmured D.

This from Violet: "You are going? Please don't go!" A pause. "Please come again! You will, tomorrow? There, she's gone! Some one is here by me." Violet drew back, as if shrinking.

"Why, it is Father," she said. "When did you come home?" Then she gave a little sigh of content and there was a sound of a kiss. A long pause; then Isabel murmured, "I'll try, Father."

The voice of Henriette was now heard at the door and I asked if she should be invited to come to the table.

"Yes," was the reply, and I turned on the lights. Violet awoke.

"Why doesn't anything happen?" she said. "It looks as if they weren't going to do anything to-night."

"How do you feel?" asked D.

"Fine," was the reply.

The table demanded silence. Almost immediately, Violet said, "It is growing dark. Why, Louise, you are back."

"Yes, I see a light," interrupted Henriette. "But to me it is like a cloud."

"I can see distinctly; it is Louise," said Violet. Henriette got up to get a glass of water and was about to resume her seat when Violet cried, "Do not sit down! There is someone in your chair."

"Who is it?" we asked. I must confess I felt a sensation as if my hair were rising.

"It is a man. I don't know him. He is on your left," Violet said to me. "He has his arm around you."

"Who is it?" we asked.

"He says he is——" then she began to spell out: "A-u-s——"

"Is it Austin?" I interrupted.

"Yes," she replied. "He says he is Austin. He wants to tell you that he is unable to talk with you through the board."

"Austin" was my brother, who had died several months before. Violet had never heard of him, and of course knew nothing of his death.

"Has he not talked with Mother?" I asked.

"He says, 'Yes.'"

Henriette again attempted to resume her seat, but Violet peremptorily forbade her and the former brought another chair. A moment later Esther's husband came for her and she left. The four of us resumed our seats. Immediately Violet saw the lights again, and Henriette began to see them. Both said they could see several. After a moment Henriette said, "The room is full of lights."

"There is a man sitting at my side," said Violet. "He is strange. He looks like a foreigner. He says he came to see you"—she spoke to Henriette. "His name is G-u-s-t-a-a-f"—she spelled the strange name out.

Henriette almost shrieked: "He is my brother, Gustaaf, and that is the Flemish way of spelling his name."

We now began to feel that the strain upon Violet might be severe and brought this sitting to a close.

Violet's thirteenth birthday came the next day, and in the evening D. and I heard for the first time what purported to be a voice from the other world. Before this, when requests came through the board to tip table, our spirit visitors had expressed a preference for a small room on the lower floor of the house, bearing out the theory held by some psychical investigators, that in a "cabinet" better results are obtainable in spirit communication.

On this particular night, after we had been requested by Louise through the board to tip table, D., Violet and I "assembled" in the small room with the little table I had made. Immediately the light was put out and the table began to tip. We were informed that nine spirits were present, and these were named as Violet's five guides, one guide each for D. and myself, and Louise and Morton. After a few minutes Violet told us that she saw Louise, and described her. A moment later, she said she saw all the guides, and named and described them to us.

Now we had no idea at the time that Violet was semi-entranced, nor were we aware of it a little later when she became fully entranced. As a matter of fact, it was several nights before we realized what had actually been happening.

So that we didn't quite know what to make of it when Violet said, in a deep voice, "John," and repeated the name several times. We were told later that it was

actually "John," Violet's guide, using Violet's voice, and that he thus introduced himself to us.

"John" spoke then and there with an appearance of authority, and he it was who always thereafter assumed the chief rôle among our ethereal visitors. He and we had a long discussion about the book and about religious sects, but what he said on the latter subject he warned us was only for our own personal information, and should not be made public. "John" told us that we should not think of keeping Violet with us as we had hoped to do, but that she must go back to her grandparents, who had the first claim upon her, and should finish her course at school.

For several evenings our sittings were mainly of this character and I could not understand what purpose was being served or what end was in view. Oftentimes friends who were calling took part in the sittings with us, and after we had once seated ourselves at the table, the spirits insisted that we tell the story of the summer leading up to the present time, so that the visitors might be prepared for what was going to happen.

Table-tipping and levitation always followed, but, while by advice of our spirit visitors we refrained from discussing with Violet the messages she transmitted or what she herself did on these occasions, we did not realize that a way was being prepared for Louise to come back to us and convince us of her actual presence; that, as it developed, she was being shown how to enter the body of her half-sister, and, in her own personality, as it were, spend the evenings with us. We had protested that first evening when the child had seen manifestations of spirits, but after her

first fright, she had insisted upon the table-sittings taking place every night. The letters from Louise seemed to have effect, and thereafter she was never in the least afraid.

GOOD SPIRITS AND BAD—THE CHART

CHAPTER XII

GOOD SPIRITS AND BAD—THE CHART

THE indicator would not work on the board, one evening, and we rubbed the latter several times to overcome the dampness. Finally it was signified that a spirit was present. Later on we were told by Louise that it was a guide, but he was uncommunicative. The answer to every question was "no," or "I don't know," until finally we asked, "What on earth he or she was doing on earth?"

The answer came quickly: "I am to keep you busy until Louise comes."

Finally, in reply to repeated demands for identification, it spelled out a word incorrectly.

"That is not a name," we objected.

No answer. However, in a few moments, a new force, and stronger, was manifested by the indicator. It wrote, "Some one else is here."

"Who?"

"Julius. Gordon is also here. We met here and our joy is complete."

"But had not you and your son met before?"

"I was sensible of his presence, but I could not recognize him. Now we have met and are very happy, as I said before. Gordon says," he continued, "'Tell Mother I am happy and enjoying life; as ever, Yours truly.'"

"Did you intend that last as part of a signature?"

"That was not a signature. It was an expression. Tell Mother that I send my very best love. Au revoir."

This was apparently direct from Gordon.

And then began a light and merry conversation. We heard distant sounds of a crowd at Sound Beach, half a mile away, where a Firemen's Carnival was being held. The indicator spelled out; "Carnival. I want to go. Please give me some money, Daddy."

I placed a cent upon the indicator.

"That is not enough. I want five dollars."

I put a ten-dollar bill on the indicator, and then was written; "Thanks, I will keep the change."

After a brief interval came:

"I have spent that. Please double it."

Her mother jokingly folded the bill, but the indicator wrote quickly, "I want twenty dollars." I laid another bill on the indicator, which immediately spelled, "Thanks."

"Tell us, do you ever see anything of Cleopatra, Ptolemy, Cæsar, Marc Antony or any of those ancient worthies?" I asked.

"No, they have gone on."

I asked if Louise remembered a song I had written at the beginning of the war.

She said, "Yes."

"How does it compare with the music of the spheres?" asked D., seeking to tease me.

"Pinhead! Our music is so beautiful."

The indicator was now working with difficulty, the pieces of felt at the bottom of the legs having worn and become gluey.

"I want a new pair of shoes," spelled the indicator. Louise had often called these pieces of felt, "shoes."

"But shoes are awfully high."

GOOD SPIRITS AND BAD—CHART 121

"Give me twelve dollars. No, give me twenty dollars. I can get better shoes at that price."

"Where would you get them?"

"At the K—— Bootery." That was a reference to her brother's shoe box, which contained a pair of old felt slippers whose tops I had thought of using to repair the indicator. She continued: "I want new shoes now. These scratch."

D. put a thumb tack in the forefoot of the indicator. The latter spelled, "Ouch! don't stick tacks into my toes!"

I finished the new "shoes" and put them on the indicator. The result was surprising, for it fairly flew over the board.

"These are fine—bedroom slippers—cosy comforts," it spelled.

"Cosy comforts" was actually the trade name of the slippers from which I had cut the felt, though none of us knew it at the time.

Later it occurred to me that I could improve upon the communication board and perhaps the indicator. This was confirmed by Louise, who said she would consult with more experienced spirits and next day would give us the results. She promised to draw a chart for a new board.

When I reached home from town the following evening this chart was ready, Louise having drawn it with Violet and her mother holding a pencil. It was, of course, a rough sketch, but it contained many improvements over the old communication board. It showed a new arrangement of the alphabet, words in frequent use—principally important conjunctions and pronouns—essential marks of punctuation, and phrases and family titles. Louise said that Morton

had assisted her in drawing the chart. It was this chart, worked out into practical form, that we used thereafter when we employed a "board."

Louise now announced that she had some work to do and would not be able to use the communication board for several days. She would not explain what this duty was nor would Morton. It was interesting to be told, in view of the theories that have been advanced by scientists, that she applied her power not to the point of the pencil nor to its middle but to the top. Also is interesting her explanation as to how the indicator on a communication board is worked by a spirit. The fingers of the two visible operators are placed, one on the base and the other on the point of the indicator, and the spirit hand rests between the two human hands, its fingers taking hold of the narrow neck of the indicator. Often, however, we were told, the spirit agent applies its force at the point.

After dinner, having fashioned a board after the design given us from the spirit world, I tried the ordinary indicator on it and it worked with astonishing rapidity. However, Louise was not there, the operator from the other world being Morton, who after a few words ordered us to the table and refused to communicate further. Following a short session at the table, we could get no communication whatever with the board. From neither the table nor the board could we obtain information as to how long Louise would be absent, and our household was plunged into gloom. We were not looking for phenomena; we simply wanted to hold our nightly chats with Louise.

IN THE FLESH



CHAPTER XIII

IN THE FLESH

AND now came Louise to us in the flesh; not in the body we had known as hers, but in that of her little half-sister, and without the latter's knowledge. This, it was revealed later, was what the events of the summer had been leading up to.

It happened on Monday, August 11. That afternoon Violet and D. were told by Louise to construct a "cabinet" in a little room upstairs over which the rafters sloped. Minute instructions were given them, even to directions about using the steamer rugs, and where to hang them. They were told that they could leave the electric light on, but must darken the bulb, and a red cloth was wrapped about this. We were informed that any other color of light than red takes something out of the atmosphere that is necessary in what the spirits try to accomplish.

After dinner Violet and I got out the communication board. Immediately, Louise signified her presence and wrote:

"Daddy, go upstairs and take a look at my cabinet."

After I had come back and reported, she said: "I want you and Violet and Mummy to go up there and sit at the table." And so, at nine o'clock, the usual hour, we did as we had been directed.

No sooner had we taken our seats than the table

began to get active. After a few short levitations, it suddenly rose and touched the rafters, six feet from the floor, and remained suspended long enough for us to count three. Again, and then for the third time it gave this performance. Next it rose more than two feet in the air, and moved down the room, while thus suspended, a distance of about four feet. After it returned to the floor, it danced about vigorously, as if in jubilation.

According to our custom we asked how many spirits were present. The answer was given as "nine," and were named as three guides for Violet, one for D., one for myself, and Louise, Morton, my brother Austin, and again, "Julius." The latter, we were told later, remained only a short time.

After doing many other acts of levitation, such as jumping upon the lap of each of us in turn, flying short distances through the air, and so on, the table demanded the alphabet. Then followed this command, "Sing."

Only the night before had it demanded "Old Kentucky Home," spelling the name out. We are given to understand that by the singing of melodies a sort of harmonious condition is developed in the atmosphere, which assists spirits in doing acts of levitation. After we had rendered rather lamely, "Suwanee River," "Juanita," and others of the old "close harmony" type, D. attempted to sing a Broadway favorite, but was rebuked. She suggested, "Onward, Christian Soldiers!" but a very sharp "No!" was registered. One or two other well-known hymns were rejected in the same fashion. We asked what would be an acceptable tune, and the table spelled out, "Holy God We Praise Thy Name."

Neither D. nor I knew such a song. After a time Violet remembered that she knew one that began that way, and sang it. Then we attempted to render "Holy, Holy, Holy," or as much as we could remember of it, and felt we had about exhausted our repertory.

After a moment or two the table was wrenched from our hands and thrown off into a corner. Violet, who had been seated opposite us, came and sat on the couch between D. and myself. I recovered the table and asked if we were properly seated. The answer came, "Yes."

Violet then began to breathe heavily as if in deep sleep, and her weight fell against D. I tried to raise her, but she was limp and heavy, and we let her recline, pillowing her head. In a moment she sat up between us, now in a trance, and said in a whisper, "It is Louise."

"Do you mean that Louise is speaking with Violet's voice?"

The answer was "Yes," and thereafter, for some time, it seemed as if Louise herself were actually with us. Alternately she petted her mother and me. She told us to ask questions. D. was most interested in her music.

"Do you mean when you told me you took singing lessons over there that you actually took lessons, or just simply *knew* things, as it were?" she asked.

"I have teachers—spirits who were famous musicians on earth and who are well qualified. I cannot give you their names."

Suddenly she said: "Mother I almost cried to-day. I heard you say you did not love little sister as you did me."

Upon being pressed for details she continued: "It was at breakfast, and you were talking to Mrs. ——. I always thought you loved little sister as you did me, and I do love her so."

"But, are you really Louise?"

"Yes, my spirit is using Violet's body. You cannot see the real me, but you can feel that I am using her hands and arms and that I can arise and walk"—and she suited action to word.

"You must love little sister as you loved me," she went on. "Furthermore, you must remember she is not grown up as I was. I was not perfect when I was little, either. You simply idealized me."

Then she turned to me: "Daddy—about the book. Ask me questions."

I reminded her that much of what she had given me about the spirit life, though by no means the greater part, had come in the form of affirmations or denials of questions. I suggested that she tell me connectedly, if she could, something about the life on the spirit plane. Incidentally, I mentioned that I had a headache. Suddenly the hands of Violet arose to my forehead, moved over it with a soft, caressing touch, cool and healing. Several times these motions were repeated and my headache actually disappeared.

"Can you do what I asked?" I persisted.

"I am thinking," came the reply. Then, after a pause:

"This is *the* life. There is never any unhappiness here. Although this is but a continuation, this life is the same as yours, only much happier and much more enlightened."

"Do you have houses to live in?"

"Not exactly. You have heard the expression,

'building castles in the air.' That, in effect, is what we do—and live in them."

"But what do spirits really do? What is their course after quitting the body?"

"Do you mean good spirits, or bad?"

"Good spirits," I answered.

"A good spirit, the minute the body of that spirit has died, is met by sweet spirits from this plane—mostly those who were friends on earth—who have come to take that spirit with them. On arriving in this other world, if that spirit has not looked forward in life and has made no attempt to prepare for a future life, it does not realize at first where it is; it only believes it is still on earth. Afterwards, some good spirit may come along and help this new spirit—bring it up higher. From then on we fulfill our daily duties the same as you do, until we are enlightened and prepared for Heaven. Then the gates open, and the spirit passes on to Eternal Happiness."

"And the bad spirits?" I asked.

"They are earth-bound, and may have to stay on earth for thousands of years, wandering about, unseen and unrecognized by those who were dear to them in their former life. Then, when finally they leave earth, they may have to stay in our world thousands of years more. Then, only, may the spirits of the wicked begin to take steps toward Heaven. If a spirit has been terribly, unforgivably bad during its life in the flesh, it is unhappy forever."

"Anti-Christ's are not earth-born," she said in answer to a question. "There is war between the good spirits and bad, not only in your world but in ours. I have never seen an evil spirit."

"Then any man who tries to do right in this life

has a good chance of getting to Heaven?" I asked.

"Yes," was the reply; "and if one has really repented, his chances are equally good."

There was a pause. Then came, faintly, "I have to get more strength—wait."

Violet's figure reclined for a moment and we heard several deep intakes of breath. This was only momentary, for an upright posture was soon resumed. I asked for some more information about guides.

"As you were told before," Louise resumed, "when a child is born, two spirits from Heaven are assigned to guide it through life. As the child grows it may call more spirits to it, either good or bad as the child's nature is good or bad. Yes, guides have been in Heaven," she said in response to a question.

"Do all things in your world seem tangible?" D. asked.

"Yes, and no."

"Do you eat?"

"In a way, yes. We don't have to eat, but we may if we materialize; we may prove our materialization by eating."

"Is this what you call materialization?"

"No. My spirit is simply in Violet's body."

"When you speak on the board, are you actually present?"

"Yes. I am standing there, and I place my hand on the indicator between your fingers and those of the other person, taking hold of the little neck of the indicator."

"Do you prefer this form of communication?"

"Yes—it is more direct."

She touched her mother's face. "Don't you feel that?" she asked. "I am proud of my efforts. I am

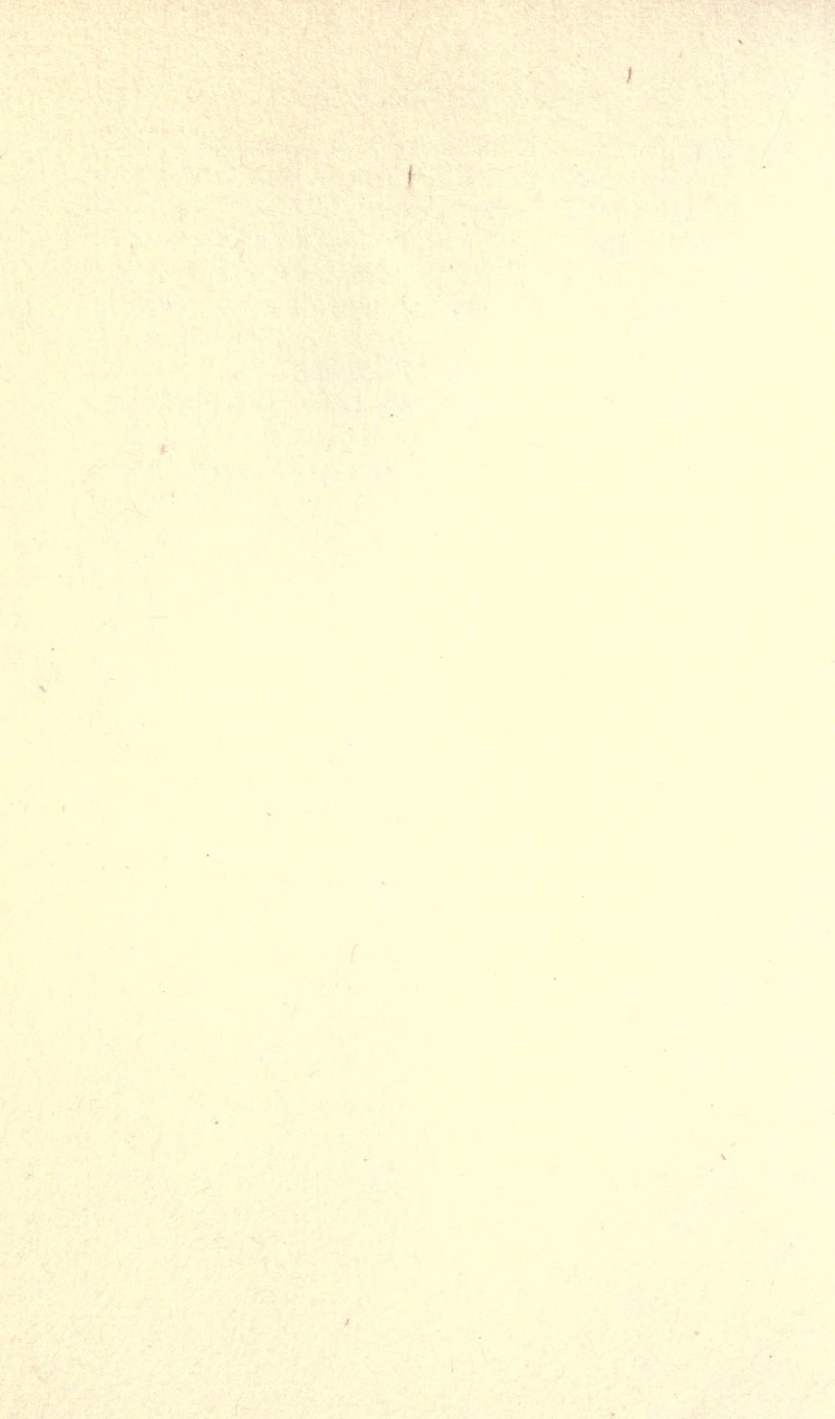
able to control this medium better than any other."

"Why is it?" asked D., "that you don't remember some things that I have mentioned."

"There are things I wish to forget and there is so much now to know. No, I would not care to come back. Daddy and Mummy, I must go now. You are tired."

"But Mummy is not tired," protested D.

"Yes; Violet is coming back now. Good-by."



AN ADVENTURE INTO SPIRITUALISTIC
REALISM

CHAPTER XIV

AN ADVENTURE INTO SPIRITUALISTIC REALISM

ON August 12, we were in town. Having learned what we had about the possession of mediumistic power by persons who frequently did not suspect it, we happened to think of a very good friend of ours and Louise's, a man of Armenian birth, of scholarly attainments, and exceptionally well-read, whose extreme sensitiveness to outside impressions we had frequently remarked. As a matter of fact, during the few days preceding, we had spoken of having him visit us in the country, and now D. thought, as we were going to spend the night in our apartment, we ought to have him to dinner.

Over the telephone, Mr. K. told D. he had just had a shock because of the death of a young friend, but accepted the invitation. D. immediately afterward went to the communication board, where a guide signified its presence. Then she was told that a young man whose name was given as "Francis James Alban, an Armenian," had died in Mamaroneck the day before. We thought this might prove to be Mr. K.'s friend, but we were mistaken. It developed that the spirit that had guided the indicator was a stranger to Louise, and we were somewhat mystified. However, we had learned that other spirits who wish to get through to friends on earth frequently force their presence on communication boards, in the hope that

they may be able to make delivery of a message through the good offices of the person using the board.

After we had gone home from dinner, the board immediately made a demand for "table." We had none in the house small enough to be used, and asked if a heavy, high, wooden stool would be satisfactory. There was some hesitation about accepting this substitute, but when tried, it was found to work satisfactorily. We were directed to go into D.'s dressing room and shut out all light if possible. However, a reasonable amount came through the window from without.

Immediately the stool began levitating. After a few efforts, it suddenly rose until my hand struck against the chandelier, more than six feet above the floor. Several times this performance was repeated. Our guest was amazed. We were informed that he had considerable of the mystic power. After a number of questions had been answered, the table called for the alphabet, and registered "T." This was the signal that Violet was about to go into a trance. Later on, several other code signals were developed, one a green light. When Violet saw the latter, it meant that she was about to become entranced.

We heard her draw several long breaths, and she sank back in her chair. A brief interval, and a whisper came: "It's Louise."

"Do you mean that Louise's spirit has now taken possession of Violet's body?"

"Yes. Wait!"

She arose and went and lay upon the couch. D. addressed a question to her.

"Wait," came the whispered answer.

After a brief interval, she returned to the table

and caressed D. and me. Then she sighed: "Mummy, I have not enough power."

A fearful din was coming from the street into which the little court outside opened. I closed the window. She got up from the table and went to the window, and tried to open it. I raised the heavy sash, and she peered out, though her eyes were closed as if to see whence came the noise. "Close the window," she said, and went back to the table.

"Let's go to Mother's room," she whispered after a moment. This meant her mother's bedroom, a room into which came hardly any noise. She arose and started for the doorway; but stopped in front of a mirror in a wardrobe door, and looked at it. I say "looked," though her eyes were still shut. She started to pass through the doorway; but drew back. "Turn out that light," she commanded.

The only light there was in the hall came from an electric bulb in the hallway outside the apartment. I stepped out and turned the key, and was rewarded by a "That was right."

Then, with me following closely, she moved up our long hall, stumbling at times—for it was explained to us that walking is extremely difficult for a spirit that has had little practice in entering a human body—until she came to D.'s bedroom. She entered, sat upon the bed, and then reclined, apparently to gather power.

After a short period, she got up, and started for the door, with me just behind her.

"Where are you going, Pet?" demanded D.

"I want to look at the house," was the reply.

Up the hall she made her way, her eyes still closed, and turned into the dining-room on the left. There was no light in any of the rooms, except what came

through the windows. At the old phonograph, almost unused since she had danced to it, and broken and nearly "voiceless," she paused, and carefully turned it on. After two or three minutes, she turned it off. Then she went through the double doorway into the drawing-room, and made her way to one of the windows, beneath which was a bookcase containing a miscellaneous collection. From the latter she selected a small volume, and clasped it in her arms.

"My book," she said; "my book!"

This we found later was a "Chardenal's French Course," and upon the fly-leaf was written her name in her own hand.

From the bookcase she moved along the end of the room to the high, old-fashioned desk in the corner, whose top was a sort of family shrine, for on it stood a large photograph of Louise, a smaller picture of her fiancé, and one of her brother, in his uniform.

She took up the picture of her fiancé and clasped it to her breast.

"My Dick"—a pause. "My Dick, my Dick!" in the tenderest, saddest accents. Then she gave a sob that wrung our hearts, it was so real.

With the picture and the book she moved across the room to the doorway leading out into the hall, through it and along the hall until she reached the door of the room on the right that had been hers. She entered.

"My room," she whispered.

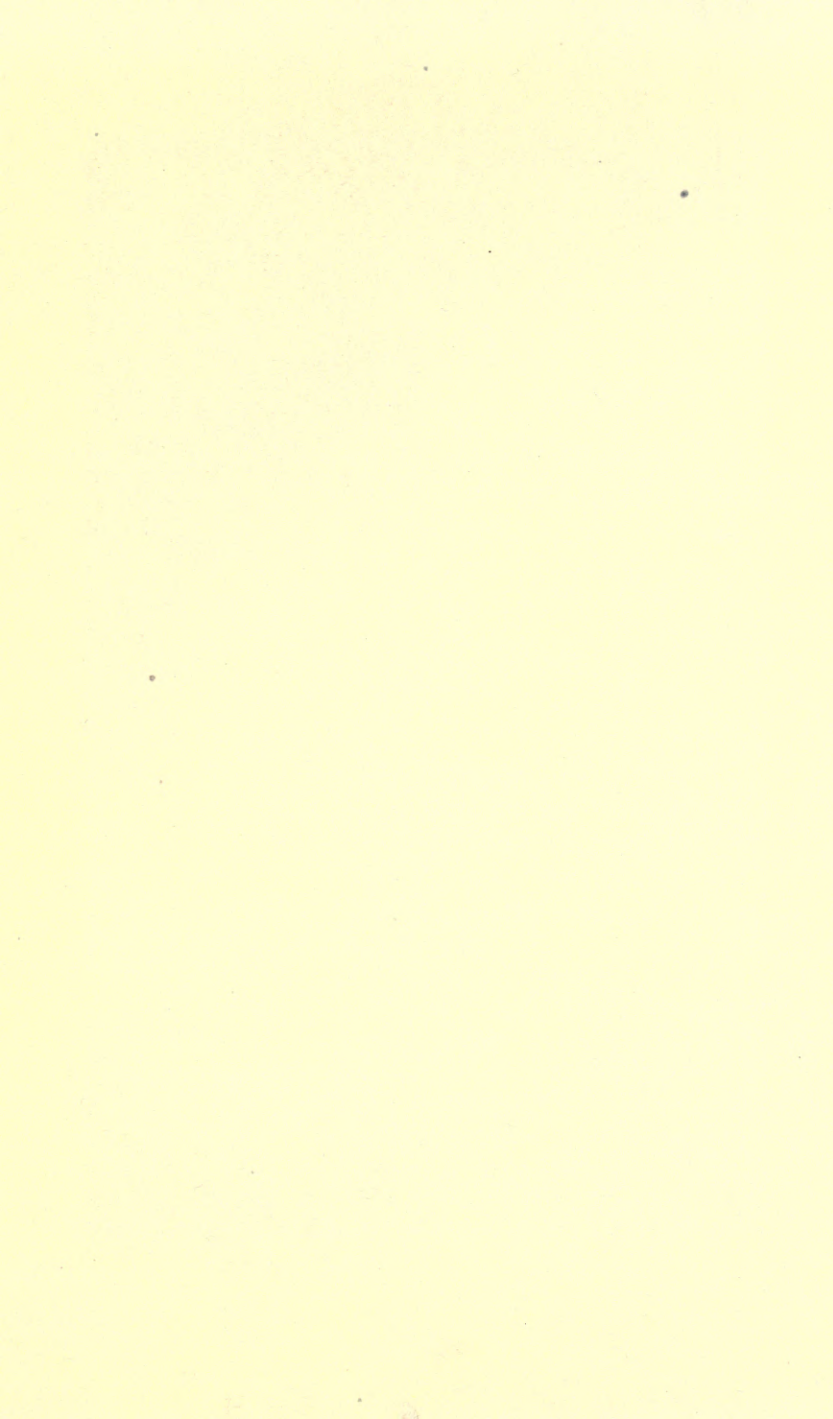
She went in and stopped at the dressing table, upon which she put the photograph and the book. She looked into the mirror. Then she moved toward the bed.

"My bed," she said, and lay down upon it.



LOUISE AT HOME

(A Snapshot)



After a moment, she got up and went back into the room in which we had first sat.

I volunteered to put the photograph and the book back where they belonged.

"No," was the reply, "I shall put them back myself."

And she got up and moved, stumbling somewhat, but much less than before, found her way up the hall and into the drawing-room, halted again before the bookcase, and laid the book upon it. Then she approached the desk. She again clasped the picture in her arms, and breathed, "My Dick! My Dick!" and kissed the photograph before depositing it lovingly upon the desk.

The window by the desk was open, and the curtain was flapping about in a way that had often dislodged the picture. There was a wide-flanged Tiffany glass vase on the desk. This she placed in front of Dick's picture in such a way that the latter stood firmly, and then into the vase she put a little bronze owl seal, weighing, perhaps, half a pound, so that it would be impossible for the curtain to move the picture.

Upon his return from the war, her brother had had two photographs taken, one of which made him look very serious, while the other showed him smiling. It was the former that stood on the other side of Louise's picture.

"I do not like this photograph," she said. "Put the other one there." She then went slowly back to the dressing-room.

I was now alone with her, D. and Mr. K. having lingered behind to discuss what was happening. She went to her mother's dressing table, peered in the glass, and from the articles on the dresser selected

one I could not see. Then she went back to the couch and called, "Mummy!"

I repeated the summons.

"What is it, dear?" asked D. going to her side. D. could distinguish that she was holding something in her hand.

Now during her life with us, Louise when she had received a letter from what to her was one of the most important of persons, or when she had something she pretended she did not wish her mother to see, would often turn her head away like a little child, and make as if to conceal her treasure. The form on the couch went through exactly the same motions. Then Louise whispered, "Bend down—closer."

D. did as she was told. Suddenly the figure that was Violet's made a motion with one arm, jabbing a powder puff down into its box, and before D. could guess what was coming, her face was covered profusely with powder.

"Leave it on," coaxed a voice that was just like Louise's.

"But it might scare Violet when she awakes."

A laugh sounded—a laugh that began as Louise's, but which ended harshly and unnaturally. We were startled.

"Why, dear, that is the first time I have heard you laugh," said D.

"Yes," came the voice, wearily. "I was not successful. Laughing is very hard to do. But, Mummy, I am really proud of what I have been able to do to-night."

She arose and went back to the table. "Good-by," she whispered. "Violet is coming back."

And sure enough, in less than a minute Violet awoke

and in her natural voice, asked, "Well, why doesn't the table go on tipping?"

We adjourned to the drawing-room and took up again the communication board. Louise was there. We asked how many spirits had been present. She answered, "Twenty, at first, but all left after a time except Father and myself. We were able to do everything that was done. The others were merely on-lookers."

We asked her to recall something that all of us would remember.

"I can remember Riverside," she spelled out on the board, very fast, "when we all played ball on the lawn. We had eaten raspberries, grown in the garden. Daddy was building a chicken coop, and my two friends, the S——s, were there. We danced around on the lawn and had a very good time."

Then three of us recalled that in the summer of 1915, the last before Louise's illness, Mr. K. and two French friends of ours, Mlle. A. and Mlle. C., had spent a Sunday with us, and the S——s had come over after luncheon. Louise took part in a little game of ball on the lawn, in which Mlle. C.'s awkward efforts to throw the ball in the American way had amused us all very much. We remembered, too, that that day we had had our first raspberries for dinner, and we recalled the dancing, and the fact that I had spent the afternoon building a little portable chicken coop for a hen and her brood.

INTRODUCING SOME FRIENDS OF LOUISE

CHAPTER XV

INTRODUCING SOME FRIENDS OF LOUISE

WHEN I took up the board after going home in the evening of the following day I remarked to Louise that I thought she must have been with me, for I had done a great deal of work. Business had gone very well and I had found time to accomplish something on the book.

"No, I was not there," she replied; "but I can tell you that Julius, Austin, and your guide, Albert, were with you."

"Do you really mean to say that Julius was in my office assisting me?"

"Yes."

Next followed the usual command to tip table and we were directed to go upstairs for this—D., Violet and myself.

The first thing that happened was a levitation of the table to the ceiling. Then, despite our protests, we were directed to sing. This time our visitors were willing to hear "Onward, Christian Soldiers." When they answered "Yes" to a question of D.'s as to whether they preferred "old chestnuts," we tried "Suwanee River" and some of its contemporaries, and the table made no protest. Then we sang a little French song with which Louise's memory will always be linked—"Colinette."

I can see her now, sitting at the piano, playing her graceful accompaniment and rendering with inimitable pathos :

"Elle est morte en Fevrier ;
Pauvre Colinette ! Pauvre Colinette !"

Whenever she sang that, both her mother and I used to experience a chill of apprehension. The song was associated with Louise by several of our friends. As we sang, the table kept time in gentle cadence. It was the same when we started "Bonsoir, Madame la Lune," which Louise so often would sing at my request.

After this the table tilted slightly twenty times. I asked if it meant that twenty spirits were present, but an emphatic "No" was registered. Then something occurred to me. "Do you mean the twentieth letter of the alphabet?" I inquired.

"Yes," was the answer.

The twentieth letter of the alphabet, "T," was the signal that Violet was about to go into a trance.

It must be emphasized that not up to this time nor until our summer was almost finished did Violet have the slightest suspicion that she was subject to trances. What she said, saw or did while in that condition, or even in a semi-trance, she never remembered.

However, the signal, it proved, had come early, for Violet did not go into a trance at that moment. Instead, she demanded that the spirits rap on the table. We had tried this several times with success, but the rapping had been very faint. Now followed a series of taps that were much louder than any we had ever heard. Soon the alphabet was called for and "T" registered again. This time there was no mis-

take, for almost immediately Violet, who had taken a seat between us, began to slumber. In less than five minutes her figure was sitting erect again, and the whisper of Louise informed us that our daughter was now with us "in the flesh." She did not say much at first. After a moment, she arose and went to the window, raised the curtain, and then lifted the sash. Next she put down the latter and lowered the curtain. When she had resumed her seat I said, struck by her action and mindful of what we had been told:

"Is it possible that persons who walk in their sleep are under the control of spirits?"

"Yes; their own spirits have left their bodies and other spirits have taken possession of them."

Her next act rather startled us, for she climbed upon the bed, stood up, and then jumped to the floor. This action she repeated. Her object, she explained, was to show us that she was gaining control of Violet's lower limbs. Then she leaned over to where a box of candy lay upon a dressing table, took it up, removed the cover and passed it to me.

"What did you do last night in the dining-room at the apartment?" asked D.

"Played the 'Merry Widow Waltz.'"

This was the record that had been so weirdly ground out by the phonograph.

"And what was the book you took from the shelf?"

"French." Then she murmured, "Poor Dick, poor Dick!"

"But was that a real sob of yours last night?"

"No; that was just for Dick. He feels that way. I am not unhappy."

D. had now seen spirit lights four times during our sittings, but I had seen none. I suggested to Louise

that if I could see the lights and actually behold a spirit, I might be able to write much more convincingly. She turned to me and said earnestly:

"Daddy, I have been trying so hard to make you see something, but I don't think you have psychic eyes. Mother has, somewhat, but you have not."

"Don't you like writing with a pencil?" asked D.

"Yes, but it is hard—not that I have to make a very great effort simply to write; but I try to write in my own hand and I get it mixed with that of Isabel, whose hand is on the pencil, and then people criticize and think she is actually doing the writing.

"I like to come back this way," she continued. "I know it makes you happy, Mummy, because it is the nearest representation to actuality I have been able to make. Not many spirits have such a chance. By the way, you must never awaken Violet while she is in a trance. It might cost her reason. She could stay in a trance for about four hours without the slightest injury. Spirits like to enter human bodies whenever they can, just for the pleasure of it and to tell what they have done. It is regarded by many of them as a real feat."

Then, for a time, her father, Morton, took possession of Violet's body and greeted us by shaking hands. The voice changed and the handshake was given in a manner that D. said was peculiar to him. He soon said "Good-by," and then Louise came again, and in Violet's body caressed and fondled her mother, using all the little familiar tricks of gesture and endearment they alone knew. Her presence seemed so real, it was as if she had just come back from a long absence in the old days. It made her mother radiantly happy.

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The following night, after we had assembled in the "cabinet" under the rafters, the table went through its usual performance of rising to the ceiling. Next it went up and waved about in the air.

John came while Violet was in the trance. Louise said it was he who was directing the whole series of table-tippings and trances. He told us that many persons were attempting to use communication boards but without great success. With the new board he thought such communication would be much easier. "However," he added, "very few mediums possess power of the same degree as Violet's."

In New York, he told us, many circles of communication had been started, but none of quite the same character as ours—that is to say, just of the home and immediate family—and there was absolutely no other anywhere in which the medium did not know she was a medium. None had been able to get as far as we, he added. Upon his arrival John had shaken hands with us—a very strong grasp. He said his visit was occasioned by our having asked for him the evening before.

Next, Paul, one of D.'s guides, came for a short time. He said that John was the spokesman of the group operating with us, and he himself had merely come to shake our hands.

The evening of August 15, a fierce thunderstorm was raging when we took our seats in the "cabinet," and natural conditions seemed at their best. The table went to the ceiling, dropped, then ascended again a few feet and floated in the air from side to side.

D. asked, "Are you trying to imitate a cloud?"

"Yes."

Then the table ascended again and swung about in

the air like a pendulum. All at once, while our hands were still upon it, it jumped through the air, leaving us and landing firmly on its feet on top of a little dressing table in the corner of the room.

Violet and D. kept seeing the lights in the room, but I could not distinguish them. While D. saw only colored illuminations, Violet saw forms.

Louise "arrived" during a peal of thunder. She shuddered as she came and was asked why.

"I am rather frightened," she replied. "Ours is a land of sunshine and summer. We never see or hear those things. Still, electrical storms make conditions good for communicating. Now I have to go. Others want to come."

"Who?" we asked.

"Father, John, Paul, George (my guide), and Kirk." These came in the order named.

"Good evening," said Morton, holding out his hand. He talked only about Violet, and when we asked for information on certain points, he referred us to John, shook hands, and said, "Good-night."

"Good evening, D. Good evening, Albert," said a voice much deeper than Violet's.

The hand of each of us was clasped very firmly in turn. It was John, who after some moments' conversation gave place to Paul, one of D's guides, who said to her, "Good evening, D.," and shook her hand. He would not answer questions, but added, "You may get me through the communication board any evening. I will not hinder you now. Good night," and he placed both hands on her shoulders in a gesture of benediction.

Next came George, with a "Good evening, Albert," and a shake of the hand. "I just wanted to say

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hello to you. Louise occupies the board so much we have no chance. This is not selfishness on her part—just love. I must go. Good-by.”

Then I saw a light, the first I had seen, on D’s arm. It was oval in shape, about four inches long, and slightly less than three inches wide; an opaque, vaporish mass, of bluish tinge. I asked through the table if I had actually seen the light and the reply came, “Yes.”

Then Louise came back into Violet’s body. After a moment she said, “That light was I, Daddy.”

Next came a new-comer who announced that he was Kirk, one of our son’s guides. He remained but a short time.

“Louise wants to come back,” he said. “She is pushing me away. Good-night.”

Louise came long enough to announce herself, but hurriedly exclaimed, “Oh, I have got to go!”

Then an extraordinary thing happened. Violet’s body sat upright and a deep, guttural whisper announced:

“Me Big Chief! Me Muddy Water! Iroquois; Me Iroquois. Me dance.”

Then followed violent contortions, movement of shoulders, legs and feet, as “Big Chief” danced in a sitting posture.

“What can we do for you?” we asked.

“Nothing!” was the gruff answer.

“Are you having fun?”

“Yes.”

Suddenly he stopped.

Then Louise came back, laughing heartily.

“He wanted to dance,” she said.

“Are the spirits about us laughing?” we asked.

“Yes. The room is so full of them it is impossible to count them.”

HOW LEVITATION IS DONE

CHAPTER XVI

HOW LEVITATION IS DONE

ON Saturday evening, August 16, levitation began at once. Not only did the table rise to the ceiling but it turned somersaults in the air.

Having in mind various theories which scientists have held concerning the methods of the application of psychical force in the levitation of a table, we asked if some one would not tell us actually how the force was used. Promise was given that this would be revealed later. When this information came it upset the theories we had read.

Now came one of our most extraordinary experiences in levitation, for Ed, one of our son's guides, a sort of roistering spirit, fulfilled a promise—or threat—he had made on the communication board earlier in the evening, and got control of the table, he and some friends of a kindred disposition. So fiercely did they bang the table about, that I asked them to act a little more gently, whereupon the table rose in the air several times in succession and attempted to hit me in the face. It was almost all I could do to hold it off. This sort of performance was not enjoyable. I turned on the light. The table kept demanding darkness and I switched off the light again upon the promise of the operators to act less rudely. However, they did not regard the promise

and started after me the second time, so we switched on the light again and appealed to John to send Ed and his uproarious friends about their business. Finally, Louise said through the table that "John had driven Ed and his friends away."

Violet soon saw an emerald green light which had become one of the signals for a trance. Louise was long in coming, however, because, as she explained, Violet's figure was not lying straight.

We were curious as to how Ed's claim to being an angel harmonized with his profanity, for during the early evening he had used on the board certain emphatic expressions with ease that betokened familiarity. Louise could not explain, except so far as to say that Ed considered these expressions slang. She said he had picked them up, apparently, and she also told us that Ed and his friends had meant us no harm with the table, but had taken our protests as signs of keen enjoyment on our part, and had wanted to give us more.

Louise then explained the signals for the trance.

"When Violet sees ten red lights and ten blue," she said, "or one green light, or the table tips at T., or counts twenty, that is the signal. We don't want Violet to know, and for that reason vary the signal so that she would not be likely to guess because of a repetition. John will tell you later how the table is lifted. Some one else is coming now."

After an interval Morton shook hands. He did not seem to be shocked about Ed's picturesque language. "He uses it as you use slang," he said.

I asked Morton about the number of spirits present.

"The house is filled," he replied, "and the lawn about it as well. There are easily three hundred

spirits gathered about us. You know they can see through the walls of a house, and they are packed in this room like sardines."

"But why?" we asked.

"This circle is new and has novel features. It is a home and family circle, and deep love is the great impulse on both sides; besides the medium is absolutely unconscious that she is a medium. Good evening."

John came with the usual firm hand clasp, and we immediately asked him about the method employed in levitation.

"In the first place," he said, "we get the power mostly from the medium; though, of course, not all. We take a little from both of you, for strength; only that power is not of the same kind. Yes, it is something akin to what you call 'vitality.' We use that ourselves, and we apply that force to the table. If only two spirits manipulate a table, one will push from underneath, and the other, taking hold of the table at two corners or on each of two sides, will lift. We can easily suspend the table in the air for several minutes, but we cannot get enough power without harming you all, and that we will not do. The more people there are about a table, the more power we can get. To raise the table we must have contact of hands with the table, for the strength we make use of comes from human beings. We actually take hold of the table with our hands. The reason why we ask you to sing at this time is because this produces harmonious vibration of the atmosphere. Besides, the singing of old, familiar tunes is restful to the medium and makes it easier for us to do our work. Good-by."

A short period of waiting, and then a tiny voice whispered:

"Me 'Raindrop', Mrs. J's guide. Was tiny baby."

We had been told before that "Raindrop" had died at birth.

"First time me ever knew anything in body. Me love you," she said putting her arms about D.'s neck. "Me try give Indian call." (Pause). "Don't know," she said sadly. "Can't. Me try." Then sounded clearly:

"Hala-la-la-la-la!—Me lovey you," she said to D.

Suddenly she stood up on the floor, and to our amazement did a little dance that was unmistakably Indian in character, clapping her hands rhythmically and stepping in perfect time. Then she knelt at D.'s feet. In a moment Louise was back.

The next night, in response to flattering requests from the table, we had about exhausted our repertory of old songs when D. asked if our guests wanted the "Marseillaise." Immediately the table manifested signs of excitement. It jumped about, went up in the air and struck the ceiling three times. This performance was repeated.

As we sang, it kept perfect time, marching up and down the floor, and at the "rat-a-tat-tat" of the drum-beat that follows several of the lines, it made short, quick raps on the floor. Then it limped along, making us think of a wounded soldier coming home. Later we were told that spirits of French soldiers were in the audience, and that when these heard their national song, they insisted upon marching the table to it.

Next came a series of remarkable manifestations to Violet, who was not at this time fully in a trance.

First she said she saw a picture on the screen opposite of an Indian chief in full war paint and feathers, standing in a muddy stream up to his knees. This we took to be a representation of "Muddy Water," the chief who had come to us the night before, an occurrence of which she was quite ignorant.

Then she saw a picture of Louise dressed in white and wearing a large hat, walking down a side-walk with Biddy and Chico, one on either side.

Next she saw the ten red and the ten blue lights, and soon afterwards Louise came. After she had greeted us, Louise would not let her mother touch her for a time.

"Just sit here quietly for a little while," she said; "then you will see what will happen."

She moved away from her mother.

"In a little while; I will let you know when to touch me," she told us.

There was an interval of several minutes, during which we could distinguish that something was being done but not exactly what. Finally Louise announced that the interval of waiting was over.

We asked when she had first known that Violet had power.

"That first night at the table, when she saw me. I was so sorry to frighten her."

She soon went, and then little "Raindrop" came again, repeating part of her performance of the previous evening.

Next came another little Indian spirit who called herself "Dewdrop." She apparently was delighted with the spring couch, for she spent the entire time of her visit jumping up and down upon it and uttering exclamations of delight.

Then came "Sun Flower," a third Indian. We had been told that day that two of Violet's guides, Mary and Isabella, had been assigned to other children, and that their places would henceforth be filled by "Dewdrop" and "Sun Flower." Sun Flower's story had been told on the board. It was that she was a Delaware, or Leni Lenape, and had lived five hundred years ago on the banks of the Patuxent River, in Maryland, where in my boyhood I had often picked up tomahawks, battle-axes and arrows, and had wondered at the little heaps of oyster shells in the banks which a visiting archeologist had assured me were the remains of Indian feasts. She had loved a brave named "Red Feather." He had been killed in a battle when she was just twenty, and she said she had died of "grief and monkshood," meaning that she had taken poison. She came to us with a sob.

"We Indians love you," she said to D.

Louise returned and now we found out what had happened during the interval when she would not let her mother touch her, for Violet's hair, D. discovered, was now done in two long braids. Louise said that she and the spirits of the Indian girls had taken down Violet's hair and braided it.

Just before she went into the full trance Violet had told us that some one had opened the curtain opposite. Louise said that she had done this and she also told us that she had written on the table. She added: "While you were talking to the Indian girls I went downstairs, opened a drawer of the desk, took out a pencil and brought it up, and wrote my name on the top of the little table. You will find it there. Don't make any effort to verify this after Violet awakes

until you take the table downstairs, as she must not know."

"But how did you get the pencil into the room with the door closed?" I asked.

She laughed. "Look up at the rafters. Do you see those holes between the shingles and the top of the wall?"

"What did you do with the pencil?"

"Look for it when you go downstairs. Be sure," she said earnestly, "to rub my name off the table. I don't want Violet to see it."

After the sitting was over I smuggled the table downstairs and into my bedroom. Sure enough, on top of it was written heavily and in the exact style of hand-writing which Louise used during her lifetime here, the name "Louise," twice. I tried to rub this out, but an eraser would make little impression on it and we decided that it had been written with an indelible pencil which we used for marking plants in the garden. We could not find the pencil anywhere. The sequel to this episode came some nights later.

John came again just after Louise had told us about writing on the table. He said:

"I had to laugh when I saw what she was doing to Violet's hair. She braided the left side, and the Indians did the other. You will notice that they did theirs much tighter, and higher up." Then he went on to tell us something about the lights.

"Most of those you see are not we ourselves, but lights we make by using a force from the body of the medium and properties of the air itself. However, we occasionally illuminate ourselves, and then you can sometimes see us."

"Have you other primary colors than the ones we know?" D. asked.

"Yes, but I cannot tell you what they are, as you would not understand the names and they would mean absolutely nothing."

"But do you all speak the same language?" pursued D.

John laughed. "We can speak your language," he said. "Spirits pick up human languages different from the language they spoke on earth by hearing them spoken, but we have a language of our own—what you would call the universal language."

After John came Morton, for a short stay, and then again came "Muddy Water, Big Chief," who started in by clapping his hands loudly and doing an Indian war dance, chanting some aboriginal melody the while he gyrated. In his enthusiasm he suddenly slapped D. in the face. This ended his performance, and then Louise came back.

Her mother felt something slipped upon her nose and found that a hairpin had been bent into a pair of "eye-glasses" and stuck there. The two had a lot of fun out of this, for it was like one of Louise's old tricks. She said she had fashioned the device from a hairpin which had served to hold Violet's hair in place before it was taken down and braided by herself and the little Indians.

LOUISE TAKES A WALK

CHAPTER XVII

LOUISE TAKES A WALK

THE next session in the "cabinet," Monday night, started with "Old Kentucky Home," sung by request. Our son consented to be present at the session but declined to sit at the table. The "Marseillaise" was called for, and the table marched about and banged against the ceiling and kept time to the "drum-beats," as before.

Then another French song was demanded and we urged our son to sing "Madelon," but he refused to be a soloist. The soldiers' spirits said that they did not know "Madelon," for some, they told us, had been killed in the first battle of the Marne and all who were present had fallen in 1914 or 1915. Finally they knocked on the rafters three times with the table and then threw the latter into a corner.

Violet now began to see pictures. First she saw "Sun Flower" and then "Dewdrop," her new Indian guides, then others. I began to discern lights—once in a while a pin-point of faint yellow, but mostly luminous masses. Occasionally there were little fragments that looked like tiny comets with tails. Then Violet said she saw the picture of a young man with long, curly hair dressed in a long robe. When asked if he were "John," she said the figure nodded its head.

Next came a picture of Louise dressed as she had appeared the night preceding, and then followed another of her, this time in evening dress. Then came the big emerald light, and Violet went into a trance.

Louise "came" immediately. She was delighted that her brother was present, and made much of him. She sat beside her mother and called him over, and playfully bumped their heads together. In a few moments she changed places with the little Indian spirit who had identified herself as "Dewdrop." Dewdrop gave us an Indian dance. Then followed Muddy Water, the "Big Chief." He did another war dance, with the result that when Louise came again, following his departure, she examined Violet's dress and told us that Muddy Water, in his energetic dancing, had ripped it. Violet later on made the discovery of the damage and could not explain it. "Sun Flower" came a few minutes later and upon D.'s expressing sympathy with her because she had killed herself, as she said, owing to the death of her lover, "Red Feather," she collapsed. However, in a moment she was active again and went over and paid the most marked attention to our son. In a few moments she asked him to marry her. He asked for time for consideration, but she said a priest whom she called a "Medicine Man" was near, and she knocked three times on the wall for him to come. A moment later she announced that the ceremony had been performed; so that apparently, the young man was saddled with a spirit bride!

We asked the next evening that the sitting be limited to one hour, and this was promised. This time Violet said she could see one of the spirit forms that were levitating the table. Just then we heard knock-

ing on the front door. Our son was in the back of the house, writing, at the time, and the knocking was repeated. We did not wish to be interrupted, and asked the table if we should go down. It said, "Yes," emphatically, and then made for the door of the room and banged upon it three times.

Soon after the callers had gone, and we had returned to the "cabinet," the table was thrown away into a corner. We recovered it, but it was again hurled away. Then followed pictures of Dewdrop, Raindrop and Sun Flower, seen only by Violet, and then came the green light.

After Louise had paid a short visit, John signified his presence in the usual way. Sun Flower next came and called for our son, but he refused to answer the summons. Morton happened in for a short chat and he told us that there were one thousand spirits inside and about our tiny camp. During her appearance, Louise spoke to her mother of being "The Roughneck of the Rockies," a nickname that had been bestowed on herself, some years before while she and her mother and brother were spending the summer on a Montana ranch. Louise was such a flower-like creature that the cowboys had taken delight in this nickname.

While she was still on the couch and we were expecting Violet to come back, I got out the table, preparing to greet the latter in the usual way, put my hands on it and began "faking" tips. I suggested that D. place her hands on the table as well, and we would see if we could really make it ascend without Violet's help. There was a whisper in Louise's voice, "Persevere." Then before we could distinguish her

movement, she had sprung to the table, put her hands under it and lifted it high.

"I just wanted to show you how we elevate the table. The other spirit operating with me grasps the sides of the table and pulls it up while I push from below," she explained.

We had intended not holding a sitting Wednesday evening. While the general effect of these sessions was good—soothing, in a measure, to us all—nevertheless they involved a certain sort of strain, and we felt it best that Violet should have a rest for one evening. We had been told that no matter whether she was in the cabinet or downstairs, Violet would go to sleep at dark, but this evening we thought we would keep her awake. The appearance of the Indians, while interesting when novel, had become to me, at least, monotonous upon repetition. We wanted to talk with Louise, and we thought she was rather generous in giving up her place so frequently. Violet herself said that she did not wish to tip table, and began to read a book.

But when nine o'clock came she announced that she was sleepy, closed her book and cuddled herself up in a big wicker chair. After a short interval she got up and said she was going upstairs to her room, and would not be dissuaded. D. followed her, because we wished to keep her awake; but when the child reached her room, she threw herself upon the bed, opened her book and began to read, refusing to undress. After a few moments I heard a sound which indicated that she had turned out the light. Just then, Rex, the big Russian wolfhound who has figured before in this narrative, appeared outside the screened porch and went through the same kind of

howling as on the night when he had startled us by his strange behavior. I hurried upstairs to Violet's bedside, and turned on the light. Her figure was lying with the face turned away.

Louise's voice said, "Don't do that, Daddy. Please turn off the light." I did so and called D. I may add here that whenever we used the cabinet without a red light, the window curtain was always left up, so that a certain amount of light came in from outdoors.

Her mother protested to Louise against this sitting and urged that it be put off until the next night, but Louise insisted it could not now be postponed.

"But I have been worried," said the mother, "because your behavior the other night when your brother was here did not seem like you at all. It was as if you were very childish."

Sobs were the answer. After a time Louise said: "That was due to my delight in being able to speak to Brother. I was really a child again, because, as you know, we were very close when we were both children."

On being comforted, she continued: "I want to tell you, Mummy and Daddy, that we have had a sort of conference in which your thoughts took part. We know that you have felt some worry and we have come to the decision that when Violet ends her visit we shall take away her power; at least, most of it. When she leaves you, she will be unable to communicate with us except through our communication board or by automatic writing. She will be unable to go into a trance. This we are able to solemnly promise you."

Our relief was great. Louise said she would not continue the sitting long, but there were one or two

little things she wished to do. First I must turn out all the lights in the house. This I did, with the exception of the light in her brother's room on the ground floor, though I closed his door. Then she said:

"I am going downstairs; and so that Violet will not know anything of this when she awakes, she will find herself sitting in the chair downstairs reading, 'At Sunwich Port.'

"Daddy, have you found the pencil with which I wrote on the table the other night?" she asked.

I confessed I had been unable to do so. She laughed gleefully.

"Then I will find it for you," she said. She went downstairs, with us following, entered her mother's room, rummaged around among some books for a few moments, and came back holding what we immediately recognized as our indelible pencil. Next she sat in the chair and was about to assume the position Violet had held when she went to sleep, but, instead, got up, went to the door of her brother's room and knocked.

"Turn out the light," she said.

He was slow about doing this, and she repeated her request and we echoed it. She then opened the door, went in, embraced him and led him out to the porch, where for a few minutes it seemed as if we were taking part in a real family reunion.

"Let's take a walk," she said to her brother.

He insisted that we all go, so she stepped out on the stone flagging, at the end of which was our old "flivver." In this she had taken many a ride before she left for the West. She greeted it with delight, and jumping in upon the front seat, took the wheel

and pretended she was driving. Then she gave a little shout and jumped out.

"Ran over a man!" she exclaimed. "Afraid I've killed him." Then she clung to her brother as if she were crying over the accident.

"I want to see the rock garden," she announced, after a moment, and started down the drive to the main road. The rest of us followed. A little way on, she demanded of her brother that they dance, and they did a fox trot, she going through the steps with a grace that was peculiar to Louise. Little Violet, I might add, did not know this dance.

There were lots of big ruts in the road, and she picked her way carefully, pretending to hold up Isabel's short skirts, and telling us to follow. Her eyes, we noticed, were closed. "Can you see?" I asked.

"Perfectly," she replied.

At the main entrance to our place, about one hundred and fifty feet from the entrance to the camp, she stopped and turned toward the house on the hill and raised both arms.

"Our house," she said. "I must see the rock garden," she continued, and started across the lawn to the right. But we explained to her that the rock garden had been neglected all summer and was no longer the beautiful spot it had been in the spring when our tenants took possession. It was overgrown with almost every imaginable sort of weed and its appearance reminded me of a neglected grave yard. She went forward a step or two, then turned away with a shudder.

Suddenly she broke away from us and turned to run up the drive to the house. I stopped her, explaining that the tenants were there, and would not

understand. She cast a long look over the whole place, shook her head and came back sadly; but in a second she was all gayety again, and the queer group of us started back for the camp.

"This is an imitation of Robert," she said, and began to do a peculiar sort of double-shuffle walk in the road, which we all recognized as a favorite step of our friend Robert's. Violet had never seen Robert do this.

It so happened that while D. was in Stamford that morning, a stout person in a big, expensive automobile had crashed into the rear of our humble "flivver" in a narrow street, and broken the lamp bracket.

Louise stopped at the rear of the car, appeared to examine it, and then said, laughing, "Bumped in the rear by Fatty Arbuckle!" She had said the same thing in the afternoon on the communication board when D. had asked her if she had seen anything unusual happen to her mother while in Stamford.

She gave us another imitation of driving the "flivver," and was then willing to go back to the porch, where she settled herself in the big arm chair in which Violet had gone to sleep, and in the identical position.

"Now you may turn on the light," she said.

We did so, and in less than a minute Isabel herself was back, rubbing her eyes; and, as predicted by Louise, she took up her book and fell to reading again, totally unconscious of her hour and a half of oblivion.

The evening of August 21, Mr. K. and Mlle. A., a French friend of ours, and particularly of Louise's, were with us in the apartment in town. The table levitated so violently, banging on the bare floor when Mlle. A. sang the "Marseillaise," that the people

in the apartment below immediately complained by telephone. A rug was put down and the table became less demonstrative.

Violet first saw a succession of the pictures and then after a short interval came twenty tips of the table and the emerald lights, and immediately afterward, Louise. She said there were five thousand spirits gathered together in the apartment, and near by, forming an enormous audience. It was difficult, of course, to comprehend this. "Julius," she said, was an interested spectator, and she indicated a spot back of Mr. K. where she said he was standing. She told that at first it was the intention of the operators on the other side to show us all spirit lights, but the evening was so oppressive we had to keep a door of the room open, and the program was changed.

Now, Violet had been unable to pronounce the names of our guests, but Louise greeted both by name, and with the handshake that had been her own. She said she wanted to go to the "laboratory" and work there. We followed her, and she actually went busily through certain processes quite as efficiently as if the room had been illuminated and her eyes open. She even found a bottle of perfume which she herself had made and had named "Lirosa." Violet knew nothing about this, but Louise said, "My perfume," and called its name. Apparently she was in a rather mischievous humor, for when she returned to the dressing-room she found some theatrical make-up, and after applying it to our faces, said we were "sights."

Then came in turn various Indian spirits, and finally, Muddy Water. We insisted that Muddy Water should not dance and he did not stay long.

John afterwards appeared, followed by Morton. Next Louise came back and insisted that we wash the make-up off our faces before Violet awoke. As usual, the latter knew nothing when she came to herself of what had happened.

SPIRIT AUDIENCES AND PERFORMERS

CHAPTER XVIII

SPIRIT AUDIENCES AND PERFORMERS

WE were inclined to demur at the idea of sitting the following evening; both D. and Violet had severe colds and we feared that a séance would do neither any good. But Louise, on the communication board, was insistent, promising that the session would be short, and that it would do good rather than harm. She said she had something important to say.

This, it developed, was in the nature of a confession; for Violet's cold had been caught two nights before when Louise, inhabiting her body, had gone out of the house and delighted us with her playful antics on the way to the rock garden and back. Louise sobbed as she made the confession, and was comforted with difficulty.

Morton came after a few minutes and, of course, John. The spirits kept their word and the session was short.

We had planned to take Saturday night off with the full approval of our friends on the other plane. It was our understanding that a vaudeville entertainment had been scheduled to take place at the Country Club, to be followed by a dance, and Violet had never been to a grown folks' party. Besides, the child had not been to even a children's party since her fifth birthday. Then, too, Laurette, a friend of ours who had been doing Y.M.C.A. work in France,

was with us for a few days, and neither D. nor I had been where there was gayety during the entire summer. Our counselors agreed with us that we all needed a change, and were satisfied that the regular nightly session should be put off until Sunday afternoon, when there was to be a short sitting, followed by a longer one in the evening.

We started off gayly enough for the Country Club, but found, when we arrived, that we had anticipated the entertainment by one week. Violet must not lose her party, however, and we drove on to the old Yacht Club, so much associated with memories of Louise. Here D. found these memories made it impossible for her to enter into the gayety, and after Violet and Laurette had had a dance or two, we made our way to the Inn at Greenwich. Here Violet had what she said was a wonderful time, and during intermissions she and D. talked with Louise with a match, which answered questions just as a communication board would.

It is interesting to note here that we early disproved the theory held by some that the use of a certain kind of wood or even wood of any kind, is absolutely necessary in communicating; for we have used wooden boxes, paper boxes, pencils, matches, a cigarette box, a heavy silver knife and a fork, a tumbler, and even a fairly heavy plate in communicating with Louise. As a matter of fact, any kind of light object may be employed, if the medium has unusual power. We have even used a sheet of paper, and many a time D. and Violet spent much of the journey to New York and back talking with Louise by whatsoever means was at hand.

Sunday was a heavy, oppressive day. Not a leaf was stirring and the idea of carrying out our bargain

caused us dismay. Finally, however, we darkened the "cabinet" by hanging a steamer rug over the window. This rug was well worn, and rays of light came through. The table insisted that we hang something over the rug and later on it was explained that absolute darkness, while not essential for tipping the table or for other things that we had seen, was necessary for levitation, except when a fairly large number of persons formed the circle about the table or when a red light was in use.

Laurette, it so happened, knew the words of the "Marseillaise," and sang the martial song to the accompaniment of noisy demonstrations from the table, which we were informed came from our friends, the "Poilus."

Louise lay down during most of her talk. Several times she drew aside the curtain and showed us, in the daylight, the face of Violet, with eyes closed. John came, and Morton, and the latter announced the coming of one who had not yet greeted us. This proved to be Agatha, Violet's mother. Louise, when she came back, found she had accidentally torn the lace on Violet's petticoat, and was very contrite. D. promised to mend it, but when Isabel discovered it later on, she blamed her own carelessness.

The room was like a Turkish bath, and this the spirits found out and complained of as soon as they had entered human flesh; for, as we were told, while they are in the flesh they experience all the feeling of flesh, so that at the end of an hour they were as willing as we that the seance should come to an end, and we resorted to the communication board.

We had been told the names of Laurette's guides, and she was very anxious to communicate with her

mother. We had made this request before going upstairs and Louise herself had promised that the opportunity would be given.

Sure enough, soon after we had taken our seats on the porch, the announcement was made on the board that Laurette's mother was present. We were advised, however, not to keep her long, as she was probably very weak in power, this being her first experience with the board. None of the rest of us knew the name of Laurette's mother and when the board spelled out the unusual word, "Frona," we were puzzled.

"That was really my mother's name," said Laurette.

In answer to our questions for facts, the communication board told us that Laurette's mother had died twenty years ago, at the age of thirty-seven. Both of these statements were verified by the daughter. Her mother gave her through the board some very sensible advice upon certain matters which a girl likes to refer to a mother. Then came various visitors—Agatha and Morton, and John and the Indians. This was Agatha's first appearance on the board.

That night, Sunday, as we had come to expect, the "Poilus" present demanded the "Marseillaise," and Laurette sang it again. They marched through it with the table, imitating the little rat-a-tat-tats of the drum, of course, and when the song was finished kept on with "drum beats." We asked if they liked hearing the song rendered correctly, and the table rose and struck the rafters three times. Then our visitors demanded "Madelon," but Laurette could not remember the words and they had to be content with a repetition of some of our "old timers."

Next came a new signal for the trance. Violet said that she saw Louise dressed in green, wearing a

green hat, and carrying an armful of ferns. The latter suddenly changed into a green illumination. In a few seconds the trance began.

Louise told us that hereafter when Violet mentioned seeing anything green at these sittings, that would be the trance signal.

Following a reportorial habit of wanting to know "those present," I asked about the audience.

There was a pause before Louise said: "As near as I can guess, there are about three hundred in this room and the number in the rest of the house and outside is approximately five thousand. You see, only those who are connected with us by blood, and other relations, or the guides of your friends who have been here before, are admitted to the room itself. You might say these have 'reserved seats.' It is just a big show."

"How are the others arranged?"

"Well I might picture it by saying, 'elevated, surface and subway.' You will have noticed that I am always the first and the last to come. That is my privilege because this is my home and my family. Yes," she said in answer to a question, "Julius is here, and so are Gordon and Austin."

She got up and went to the window and raised the curtain. A thunder storm was raging and the room was lit up by occasional flashes.

"The light will not interfere," she assured us. "It is only when we are trying to levitate that we require absolute darkness, and then only because there are so few of you."

She took up the table and placed it in the center of the room, all the time keeping up a merry little conversation with her mother. We had several times

remarked that she always used the broad "a," as in life, whereas Violet used the flat sound of the letter.

This Louise gleefully admitted. She was in a very lively humor. Having placed the table, she sat on it.

"What do you think of this for a pose?" she asked after a moment.

"What is it?" we asked.

"The Thinker," she replied.

She had actually assumed the pose of Rodin's famous "Le Penseur." Then again:

"Venus at the Bath," she announced. She assumed in turn the poses of several statues that had been familiar to her and her mother and myself either at the Louvre, or the Luxembourg, or in the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Violet, of course, knew nothing of these.

Henriette's husband, Philippe, had been her guest that day and Henriette had decided to accompany him to the train. We heard the banging of the screen door downstairs that betokened that they were on their way. Louise stepped to the window and looked out. She laughed heartily, "Love is the worst disease on earth," she said. "Look; each has an arm around the other."

We could not see them, but Henriette afterward acknowledged the impeachment.

"But you don't really mean what you said about love," her mother protested to Louise.

"No, I was joking. Love is the force that has made all this possible. See, Mummy," she continued, "I am going to do a wood nymph's dance for you."

The table was pushed back and she did a very beautiful dance.

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"You didn't learn that on earth," observed her mother.

"No, I have learned this since I left earth. Do you wish me to give you another pose?" she inquired.

"Suppose you try the 'Dying Gladiator,'" suggested her mother. The atmosphere changed at once.

"That is something I never think of," said Louise. "All my life is sweet and happy now, and I do not like to think of anything that suggests sorrow."

Then she lay on the bed and demanded before we go further that her mother give Laurette an account of all that had taken place. For more than one-half hour this continued, Louise prompting continually, and correcting whenever the details were not accurately given. We found this necessary whenever we admitted a friend into our family "circle" for the first time. Either Louise or John would insist that everything be explained to the visitor in order to assist to a comprehension of what was going to happen.

Next Morton came. He sat up and asked for a cigarette. We protested that it would do Violet no good, and that she would detect the taste when she awoke.

"Don't worry," he replied, "it will do her no harm and she will know nothing about it. The taste will be gone. Why, I haven't smoked since I died. We don't have tobacco in the spirit plane, and every time I have come back into flesh, I have simply craved a cigarette."

Of course, there were no cigarettes in the cabinet, so he insisted that I go downstairs and fetch one. I brought up the box and handed it to him. He selected a cigarette, tapped it on the box, laid the latter down,

and asked for a light. I struck a match for him and he smoked the cigarette with every indication of the deepest enjoyment. He put one foot over the other knee and clasped his ankle, assuming what he said was a "characteristic pose."

"If we only had a few empties standing around," he said, "that would remind me of old times." We changed the subject.

Next came John.

I have several times remarked the strong hand-clasp that was always characteristic of John. Each of our visitors from the other world shook hands in a different way, just as there are differences in handshaking on earth. John announced that a decision had been reached at a council of our friends from the other plane, that Violet should be told about the extent of her mediumistic power.

"This power," he assured us, "we will take away when she leaves you. If her grandmother is anxious to see the table tipped, Violet may be permitted to do that, but with that exception she will be able only to use a communication board and do automatic writing. The rest of her power will be entirely taken away.

"We have decided that you may use Violet's real name in the book. It will do no harm, and besides her story means a strong feature of human interest. You need not use any last names, and there are thousands of the same name in this country, especially in that part of it in which she lives." However, we later decided otherwise.

Morton came again. It was to emphasize what John had said with regard to the use of Violet's name in the book.

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Next came Agatha, Violet's mother.

"I just wanted to look in," she said to D. "I am Isabel's first mother; you are her second. I have no advice to give, but wanted to see you and talk with you. It is just purely my woman's point of view," she said with a laugh. Then she recalled that she had seen D. only once, and that was at Linwood, a summer resort near D.'s former home. Afterwards D. remembered that she had seen Agatha only once, and that was at Linwood, seventeen years before, after some one directed her attention to her former husband's second wife, and she had turned to find Agatha regarding her.

Next came Sun Flower and then Dewdrop, and next Raindrop, who danced a very pretty little dance for us.

"You don't like me," she said to me reproachfully. "I heard you tell John so."

"But I do like you," I returned. "I have learned to like you."

She came over and kissed me.

Next came Muddy Water, whom Louise had described as a handsome young brave, apparently about twenty-seven years old. Muddy Water got up and gave a war dance in realistically Indian style.

Then Morton came again for a few moments, and after him we heard a voice saying:

"Me little 'Weeze.'" It was Louise announcing herself in the fashion affected by our Indian visitors. "Weeze" was one of her pet names.

I might note here that one evening we joked with one of the Indian girls about her using imperfect English.

"I can speak just as good English as you," she re-

torted. "If I were to say, 'I am Sun Flower,' to your human mind it might lack reality. And so I say, 'Me, Sun Flower,' because you have grown accustomed to thinking that it is the way an Indian should speak."

"Isn't Violet tired?" we asked Louise. Then followed a very amusing exhibition.

"Wait; I will ask her," said Louise. "I will talk through her and get an answer in her own voice."

As this time Violet was lying on the bed. Louise asked in her own voice, "Are you tired, Violet?" The answer was a grunt and a kicking of the feet.

"I can do better," said Louise. "Wait a minute."

Then she asked again, "Are you tired, Violet?"

Violent contortions of Violet's figure followed, and a sleepy voice replied, in Violet's own accents, "Leave me alone," and then: "I don't want to get up."

"But how did you do that?" asked D.

The reply came with a merry laugh, "I shook her inside."

"How do you get into her body?" we asked.

"You think here that spirits walk through closed doors. Well, we spirits enter the body through open doors. No, not the mouth or the nose," she replied in answer to a question; "spirits actually go through the skin. You will have to wait until you come over before you really understand. Violet's own spirit is here listening with the other spirits. She won't know anything about this, of course, when she awakes. Now you get ready. She is coming back." So we drew up the table and were tipping it, when, after a short interval, Violet came back to herself, sat up and sleepily demanded, whether "that old table hadn't moved yet!"

SPIRITS AND HUMAN NATURE

CHAPTER XIX

SPIRITS AND HUMAN NATURE

AUGUST 25 was the day we had set for Violet to be told. When I went home in the evening I found that D. had performed the task, and that the child did not seem to be able to believe.

During the afternoon they had had a talk with Louise on the communication board, when plans had been made for letters in automatic writing which Louise was to send her mother, through Violet, during the winter. Louise wrote out what she called a "secret code" that they were to use, so that anybody who looked over Violet's shoulder would not be able to tell what she was writing. She told her mother that this code had been communicated to her by a man who said he had been a Federal spy during the Civil War and had been caught and shot by the Confederates. She gave his name as "Ben." This code I discovered upon examination was one I had seen some years ago, and very simple; made by the use of angles and dots for letters.

Neither D. nor Violet had ever heard of it.

Just as we were about to get ready for the session in the "cabinet" with Violet on the *qui vive*, for the spirits had called the meeting for 8:30, an automobile drove up, and our friend Esther came for a call. At nine o'clock Violet complained of being very sleepy

and D. took her upstairs. She rejoined us in a moment, telling me that Violet wanted to say "Good-night" to me. When I reached Violet, she was already entranced, and Louise's first words told me to invite Esther to sit with us, as the session must go on.

After Louise came a visitor, who called for a cigarette. I handed him a box and he took one out and tapped it and demanded a match. The cigarette was smoked furiously, and our visitor lighted a second. Then he said, "Is there any way to get a little drink?"

We hesitated to supply this craving but were assured that it would do Violet no harm, and mentioned there was a bottle of curaoa in the house.

"I can get it myself," said our caller, and "he" walked downstairs, with me following. He went straight to the spot where the curaoa was, measured a small glass, and before I could stop him, drank it at a gulp. I hid the bottle and upon my return found he had gone to a cupboard in the kitchen, where he filled a glass from a claret bottle. I grabbed it before he could drink it and reproved him as if he had been an ordinary mortal, for I did not wish any harm to happen to the child whose body he was inhabiting.

When we had finished the sitting, by the way, I found that he had left a lighted cigarette on the dining-room table and that it had ruined a newly enameled surface. Once upstairs, I continued scolding him, and D. added reproof. He seemed to realize what he had done and said contritely that he was going and would never come back.

When Louise came she was sobbing and it was minutes before we could comfort her. She said that

our previous visitor, who had been addicted to drink during his life-time, had experienced the same craving once again he was in the body; that he had become very much liked on the other plane, and that she was sad because of the example he had given and her fear that he had aroused my dislike. I assured her that this was not true, but that we must have a promise that such a thing must never happen again. However, it was a long time before Louise was gay again.

We had told Esther of the experiences of the night before, when Louise made Violet talk in her sleep, and the performance was repeated, Louise evidently enjoying it.

Louise sniffled a great deal, for she had set Violet's lachrymal glands going with her weeping and it was difficult to stop them. After a time she turned on the electric light so that we could see her face, and did this several times. She lay with eyes closed.

"I can keep the light on only so long at a time without doing harm," she explained.

John came. He said he had been much grieved by the bibulous activity of our earlier guest, but that such a thing would not happen again, and he begged us to forget it. It was on this occasion that I asked John to tell me something about Heaven as it really is, and mentioned the picture that some religionists conjure, of a spacious realm where angels wearing halos sit about on the edges of clouds playing harps. John laughed heartily.

"I am afraid Heaven would not be a very happy place under those circumstances," he replied. "As a matter of fact, Heaven is a continuation of this life here, without any of its unhappiness. It is the place

where you can see God. It is possible that later I may be able to tell you something more, but not now."

Next came Agatha, Violet's mother, and then the Indians, and then back came Louise.

During our conversation Louise had insisted that she would walk home with Esther, but decided later on that this would be too much of an exertion. It is, therefore, interesting to record that when I started home with Esther, Violet insisted upon accompanying us, thus demonstrating that Louise had implanted the wish in her sister to carry out what she herself had promised to do.

When I went home the next afternoon, I found D. and Violet feeling very blue. What threatened to assume the proportions of a small catastrophe had taken place. Louise had told them that she would no longer communicate with them.

She had insisted that her mother and Violet go upstairs to the cabinet in the afternoon, and they had demurred. When she persisted, they had refused, on the ground that the evening session was to take place anyhow. Then the indicator began to spell phrases in rapid succession.

"No more tip-table, no more levitations, no more forms, no more pictures, no more comets, no more white lights, no more red lights, no more blue lights, no more green, green, green lights," came the message, emphasizing the "green" this way because it was the trance signal. Then it continued: "No more Morton, no more Agatha, no more Julius, no more Gordon, no more Austin," and kept on through the names of the guides and other spirits who had visited us. Then, as D. thought the message finished, the

indicator wrote: "Oh! I forgot; no more Gustaaf,"—and so on through a fuller list; and then, "Good-by!"

The board was for some time thereafter unresponsive. Later, one of the guides said that Louise had left, "taking all her friends with her."

I was rather concerned at what I was told, and doubt entered my mind. I sat with Violet at the board for a time after dinner, and finally Louise came. I told her I was much grieved over what I had been told, and asked whether it meant that I should give up writing the book. However, she would not vouchsafe any explanation then, and I announced that we would not go upstairs to the cabinet at the usual hour.

But John came on the board, and urged that we carry out our usual program, and see what would happen. So we reconsidered, reflecting that, after all, spirits must still have some human nature left.

In the seance, John was our first visitor, and I pressed him to tell me something more about Heaven, but it was little he gave.

"I can say little more than that Heaven is not such a place as you pictured last night, with angels sitting about on the edges of clouds playing harps all day long," he said and laughed. "Heaven is a happy place, and there one finds happiness and joy; no evil, no sorrow and no suffering or anything that can make one sorrowful. The greatest happiness of all is the sight of God."

I took up the subject of Louise's behavior in the afternoon. "Is there any explanation?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, and immediately went away and Louise took his place.

This time it was a very penitent little girl who

sobbed out in her mother's arms her sorrow for what had taken place in the afternoon.

She said it had not been due to the presence of evil—just a feeling of contrariness, which, once she had entertained it, kept gathering force that could not be stopped. Then she became herself again.

It was pitch dark in the room, but we heard her take a book from the shelf overhead, and open it.

"I am going to read you something," she said, though I could hear her close the book immediately afterward.

"This is 'At Sunwich Port,' by Jacobs; page 173, chapter 13, first line down: 'As the weeks went by and no word was heard from the missing captain, it was only Kate Nugent's determined opposition that kept her aunt from advertising in the agony columns of the *London News*. Period.' "

After the seance, I got the book and opened it, and on the page and in the chapter indicated, found these words:

"Days passed but no word came from the missing captain, and only the determined opposition of Kate Nugent kept her aunt from advertising in the agony columns of the *London Press*."

Here was the sense, but not the exact wording. On the communication board I told Louise that she had not given the exact words in the book, but a paraphrase.

"Yes," she replied "you see I read it, shut the book and then repeated it from memory."

Just before she went into the trance, Violet had been weeping, because the day set for her departure was only one week off. It was several minutes before

John came, following Louise, and then he said, "I could not come until Violet had quieted down, for I could not talk very well under the circumstances."

Agatha came after John, and Louise returned once more, but we had no other visitors.

THE SEVEN SPIRIT PLANES; AND SOME
ANCIENT AMERICAN "HISTORY"

CHAPTER XX

THE SEVEN SPIRIT PLANES; AND SOME ANCIENT AMERICAN "HISTORY"

THE next evening, much to our relief, we were not asked to sing. The session was not as successful, on the whole, as many of its predecessors, and we regarded this as demonstration that singing really helps. The spirits talk a lot about "vibrations," and we gather, from what we have been told many a time, that any kind of melody helps get the atmosphere into a condition that assists in whatever form of communication is attempted. Whether it is that several voices, producing some sort of harmony, cause the air to vibrate to advantage, I do not know. That seems a plausible conclusion. Anyhow, John, when he came, blamed the absence of singing for what he admitted to be, in some respects, one of the least interesting seances we had had for some time, although we induced John to give us more information about the spirit planes.

Violet had gone into the trance, and Louise had come first, as she had on every occasion except one, giving way to John. We had had something on the board earlier in the evening about the spirit planes, and I asked John to tell me as much as was permissible.

"There are seven planes between Earth and Heaven," said John. "On each of these planes there

are ten steps, which are themselves subdivided each into three shorter steps. The spirit, in progressing, takes three of these shorter steps during the year, on the dates Louise gave you some time ago—February 13, July 25, and November 2.

“The greatest task for the spirit is at the start. The life over here must be begun properly and promptly in order for the spirit to reach Heaven in the shortest possible time. Comparatively few reach Heaven in less than seventy years, and the average time is about one hundred years. It often happens that spirits who quit your life at the same time arrive in Heaven many years apart. The great delay is at the beginning. If a man is not properly prepared for the spirit world, or if he is not met immediately upon his arrival by spirits drawn by the tie of relationship or of Love, he may have a lot of difficulty in getting started.

“Making ordinary progress, a spirit stays about ten years upon one plane. Then there comes a time when it is graduated to the next plane. I cannot explain to you how this takes place; it is something like passing examinations from one grade in a school to another. Yes, we have teachers in all the grades or steps. They are men and women who have had exceptional educational advantages on Earth, and whose training in your life helps fit them for their positions on the spirit planes.

“While the progress from step to step is generally accomplished, that is to say, from one short step to another, the examinations every year are strict, and when it comes to passing into the higher grade, it often happens that a student is held back through lack of preparation and diligence. And sometimes a spirit is more than ten years on one plane. When one goes

from one plane to the next above, there is a brief interval, which I suppose you might compare with Death, but it is not that. You might more aptly describe it as 'translation.'"

What John said naturally demanded further questioning from me, but he declined to answer more, saying "Good-by" rather abruptly. Louise, who then came back, was not inclined to give further information, and I asked if our gatherings had lost interest for our usual audiences.

She told us that a bigger crowd of spirits was in attendance than ever, but one great feature of the novelty of our séances, the fact that we had been communicating through a medium who had not the faintest idea that she was a medium, was now missing. It had been necessary to tell Violet, and we had done so; but, of course, now that she knew, the really big reason for the attendance of crowds was gone.

Very rare indeed was it, she assured us, that spirits actually entered the body of a medium. The latter sees spirits, or hears their voices and reports what she hears, or interprets pictures they make for her, or reads the words on their lips, quoting them, oftentimes, direct. In the case of Violet, there could not be the slightest suspicion of commercialism, and the spirits visiting us actually entered her body, and using her vocal organs actually conversed, in what was not her own voice, with us who had no psychic power.

Mindful of what Louise had said, we were ready for discouraging results the following evening, and had almost made up our minds that the spirits had already begun to carry out their promise to take away Violet's power, and were doing this gradually. This seemed confirmed by a message that came

through the board that the session would be short, and that only the table would probably be used. However, the sitting, once begun, led to another unusual experience. We were told that it was partly due to the fact that in entering the body of a very young person, a spirit is apt to take on some of the physical characteristics of the owner of the body.

We had not employed the table at all the evening before, but this time we followed directions, and sang. For a time there were manifestations of lights. Some of these D. saw, but all I could distinguish were lightish spots, occasionally punctuated by what seemed to be tiny comets, and might be put down by a doubter as optical illusions; but D. saw blue lights, red lights and lights of many shades.

After a time Louise came, and announced that she was going downstairs to see her brother, who was pounding his typewriter in his room. She knocked at his door, and called his name, but he was deep in an article he was preparing and declined to be interested. He had come to believe as we had, but when he was busy writing, nothing must interfere with the task he had set himself. When he would not receive her, she turned back sadly and shook with sobs. This was only for a moment, however, and she said she was going out for a walk. I stopped behind to get my hat for the evening was chilly.

A cry of alarm from my wife sent me rushing outdoors. Louise had disappeared. It was pitch dark and when I had run down the drive as far as the main road, I was undecided which way to turn. To the left, fifty or sixty yards away, lay the entrance to what Louise had called home; to the right the road led down to the Sound, past a swimming hole in

which, only a few years ago, I had had a narrow, but unromantic escape from drowning, Louise herself having been instrumental in saving my life.

Louise had spoken a night or two before of wanting to go "down to the water," and the thought awakened dreadful possibilities. However, I would not believe she had turned to the right, but ran in the direction of "home." At the entrance to the grounds I was unable to distinguish any sign of her, and so, with my heart in my throat, turned back, to make for the water. But before I reached the Camp driveway, I heard a reassuring call from D. Louise had simply played a trick on us and had hidden behind the "flivver," which had not been put into the garage for the night. She enjoyed the joke immensely, and though I was out of breath I could not reprove her.

When D. chided Louise later for giving us such a scare, she said: "Oh, I feel so young and silly in Violet's body sometimes. Then I like to play with you as I did when a little girl. As we spirits have no sensation of fear, we naturally forget how easily humans are frightened."

However, she insisted on going for a walk, and we went out to the road and toward the house, but there was a light shining in Esther's home just over the hill to the right and Louise announced that she was going there, much to our dismay. We were sure Esther was entertaining guests, and we did not want any sensational happenings. Louise was persistent, and got half-way down Esther's when I caught and held her. She struggled violently, but after a few moments relaxed, and I believed that she had fainted. I took up Violet's form in my arms. She was remarkably heavy for a child of thirteen, but

I started to carry her back to the camp, puffing and blowing at every step. I had gone about ten yards when Louise's voice spoke.

"Daddy," it said, "you should not have done that—picked me up and carried me. Violet is too heavy for you. I was just getting strength. Put me down."

Now she was willing to turn back, and she was very gleeful over the fright she had caused us, in spite of expressing pity for me, who was still paying the penalty for unwonted exercise. Once in the camp, Louise made another effort to interest her brother, but it was not successful, and she went sorrowfully upstairs. Here it was evident that her exertion had tired her and she lay down on the couch, and pretty soon "Sun Flower" came. She amused us by telling us that the Indians had given us all Indian names.

"You," she said to D., "are 'Lady-with-head-on-fire.'" My name proved to be, "Big-man-with-book." Before the sitting began, I had been reading a part of the book and Louise had been making comments on the communication board.

"Little Medie (this was the name the spirits used for Violet), we call 'Lady-sitting-on-couch-surrounded-by spirits.' Me Brave (this was the name she always called our son)—let me see what is his name. Oh! It is, 'Big-man-sitting-on-stool-playing-clicker-eating glue.'"

The last was in reference to our son's writing letters and licking the envelopes. Then in a whisper "Sun Flower" sang a little song which had all the characteristics of Indian melodies.

The next visitor declined to announce his name. Finally we drew from him that he was Morton. He refused to talk until I had reminded him that he had

promised to get me some information about how the Indians first reached this country.

"I have it," he said, "and that is what I have come to tell you." And then followed this, word for word, as I have set it down:

"In the beginning, this continent was joined with Asia. Soon after what you call the beginning of the world—as nearly as I can establish it, just before the time of the downfall of the Tower of Babel—the two continents broke apart and a great cataclysm covered an enormous area with the sea. Before this time, the ancestors of American Indians, in small numbers, had made their way through deserts and forests to what is now this continent, even going to Mexico and parts of South America. Some of them were of the same race as the Egyptians, and naturally of the same civilization. These people went to what is now Mexico and Peru, where they built temples and monuments that in some ways suggest Egyptian architecture. They were similar to the Medes and ancient Persians. Perhaps the relation to these was closer than to the Egyptians. Anyhow, they were builders, like all those races. You know history teaches that in their beginning the Egyptians were not much more than Indians, but developed a civilization of their own. Of course the number of that stock that had got so far away from the cradle of their race before the Flood cut them off from the rest of humanity was small, but in time their descendants became great nations."

"Where did you get this information?" I inquired.

"I got it from an old guide who lived about that time. As far as I have been able to learn, the world existed long before the date that biblical scholars like

to agree upon, and the 'six days' spoken of in the Bible as the period of its creation should not be taken as six days of your time.

"To revert to the physical part of what I have said, it is known here that the Atlantic Coast is gradually slipping into the sea, while the western side of this country is gradually rising. This is, however, a very slow process. Nevertheless, thousands of years hence there will be no land where we now are, and New York will have disappeared beneath the sea. However, there is no immediate occasion for alarm. It may interest you to mention that west of California will arise new lands now undreamt of.

"Adam was the first real man. That is established. But before that, there was a long period of development before God created Adam in the form that man is to-day, and with the reason that distinguishes him from brutes. The parents of Adam were not like common apes; but the ape had been developed until Adam's father and mother were creatures half man and half ape. Of course, this supports the Darwinian theory. At that time God was very close to the earth. He spoke to men and talked with them, and it was from Him that the Ten Commandments were given Moses.

"I heard you asking John last night for information about life on the spirit planes. It may interest you to know that we who are on this plane can communicate with those on the plane above, often in much the same manner as you communicate with us. We have spirits who correspond to your real mediums on earth and through whom communication is held. I cannot tell you the name of this plane except I may say that it is the one on which we have to make up

for the wrong that we have done on earth before going on to the next plane. For some it is hard, but Hell itself, as it really is, is not for human beings—only for the devil and his imps. The ‘hell’ that is experienced by men and women who are unforgivably bad on earth is far worse than Hell itself could possibly be.”

He would not go into particulars. Louise had said that the “unforgivably bad” are earth-bound for thousands of years.



LEVITATION EXTRAORDINARY

CHAPTER XXI

LEVITATION EXTRAORDINARY

OUR visitors seemed to prefer old songs, but at our next session, on Friday night, they consented to hear something of a later vintage than we had been giving them. They admitted, for instance, they liked Harry Lauder, and when "I Love a Lassie" was sung, the table thumped through the little dance that the Scotch comedian has made famous. This evening they took possession of Violet before she was fully entranced, somewhat to our dismay, but there were no evil results.

D. and Violet had been at Woodlawn during the afternoon and had stopped at a stone-cutter's to inquire about a design for a monument. They had endeavored, through a way they had of communicating with her at any time, to get Louise to select a stone, but she did not seem to be interested, although she was induced finally to express a preference.

At the séance in the evening D. recalled to her the visit to Woodlawn, but Louise treated it very lightly. She said what was in the ground seemed to her "Nothing but an old, ragged dress." "Mummy," she went on, "you cried at Woodlawn this afternoon." Then, when D. protested: "Yes, you did. You and little sister, too. I don't want you to do that."

A little later on, when her brother had refused to

come and join us, she said she would go down to him. She had often warned us against turning on the light suddenly when Violet was in a trance, though she had assured us that a red light did not make any difference. As we had neglected to put a cloth over the light this time, we asked if it would be safe for her to go downstairs with the lights on in that part of the house.

"I will make it so," she replied, and tied a thin shawl about her head.

Her brother had just got back from town and work, and was eating supper. She played with him for a time, and took a spoonful of apple sauce and ate it.

Later on, she told us, in reply to questions, that when she entered Violet's body, the sight of her brother always took her back to the time when they were little children together, and she could not help being childish at such times.

John came for a short time and we asked him if he had been in Europe lately. He said he had not, and that though he had spent a great deal of time in Europe during the war, he had not been there since the armistice.

"So many of us were occupied during the war with 'taking the boys over,'" he said, meaning that they had been engaged in meeting the spirits of those who were slain, or died from disease.

Agatha said she "went over" eight years ago. This we learned later was true. She had realized for a long time before that she was going, as hers had been a long illness, and she was more or less prepared. The only thing she regretted in going was having to leave her little girl behind.

Once before, during the summer, we had tried the

experiment of putting a blank piece of paper and a pencil in a box, to see if Louise could write upon it. The result had been failure, for the paper was still unmarked when we unwrapped the box. This night we were encouraged to repeat the experiment. Each of the three of us examined the paper for signs of a mark, and the others watched while one put the paper and pencil in a box, wrapped and tied it up, and sealed it with sealing wax. Certainly no human agency could have marked that paper now.

We took the box upstairs and kept it in the "cabinet" while the séance was going on. None of us touched it. When, at the end of the session I unwrapped the box, I found a heavy ring in lead pencil on the paper.

Louise had said, during the sitting, that Morton always had with him a pet cocker spaniel, named "Teddy." Afterwards Violet said she remembered "Teddy," and that he had died when she was about four years old.

We were scheduled to go to the country club on Saturday evening, and by agreement the séance was not to take place until the following night. While D. and Violet were conversing on the board early in the day, a new, hesitant touch came upon the indicator and spelled out that it was "J. S." D. could not identify such a person.

"Why, I was your 'fellow,'" spelled out the indicator, using a colloquialism of some years ago.

"Where did I know you?" asked D.

"I used to know you in Bay City," was the reply.

This did not help much, and the indicator continued: "I was sixteen when I died from diphtheria."

Then D. remembered that when a child of thirteen

she had cherished a great admiration for a boy several years older than herself, whose name she had forgotten, except that it was "James," and that his last name began with "S." That boy had died at about the age given by "J. S." and from diphtheria.

That afternoon Louise said she was going to try a new experiment. A girl friend had lost her mind a short time after Louise became ill, and the latter had asserted on the board that the spirits of the demented partly quit their bodies. She said she was going to try to bring Geraldine's spirit to talk with us. A little later the indicator began to manifest power of an entirely different character from that shown by Louise, and said that it was being operated by Geraldine. The latter explained that it was only partly detached from its body, otherwise it could "talk" better. Later I took up the board and what professed to be Geraldine's spirit began to talk with me. I remarked that this was uncanny and my mind could not quite grasp the idea of a spirit absolutely quitting the body when that body was awake. The spirit, apparently baffled by my skepticism, went away.

We were now approaching the end of our strange summer. Under our agreement with the spirits, the séances were to close on Tuesday, September 2. Full séances were to be held Sunday and Monday nights, and just a short session on Tuesday night in our apartment in town. Violet was due to leave for the West on Wednesday and we had been promised that her power would be taken away before she left, so as to safeguard her from any danger that might come through it.

On Sunday evening, August 31, we had been singing downstairs to keep up our spirits, for the child had attached herself so much to us that the idea of

separating from her made us sad, and apparently our musical efforts had counted in getting harmonious atmospheric conditions, for we had hardly taken our seats and turned off the light when things began to happen.

Violet was sitting on a wicker stool that looked like an inverted waste basket. The table called for a Harry Lauder song. Immediately Violet's stool began scraping along the floor, and she cried: "See what they are doing!"

We turned on the light and found that she and her stool had been moved bodily back one yard. We had hardly turned off the light again when there was a noise as if some one were falling upon the floor. The light revealed that the stool had been snatched from under Violet. Again the electric light was turned off and the same thing happened. I may add that enough light came through the window to make it possible to distinguish objects, and Violet was between me and the window.

Violet then said to me, "There is some one standing between you and Mother." We asked the table who this was and it spelled out the initials, "J. S.," who was identified as the boy who had talked to D. the day before. He spelled out his first name as "James."

Next, Violet's stool, with her on it, was pushed across the floor again. Then it was twisted around and around. I had now put out my arm to prevent her from falling.

We put our hands on the table, which began to spell. It said: "Leave Violet alone," and made a lunge in my direction. This I interpreted to mean that I should not touch her while the experiment was going on. Then the table made a lunge toward Violet and spelled out, "You take hands off table."

"This seat feels just as if it were charged with a big current of electricity!" exclaimed the child.

The wicker stool began grinding and twisting upon the floor, creaking as it went. Every few minutes we would turn on the light to see what had happened.

Suddenly the child and the stool were lifted in the air a distance of about six inches. The next act was for both to describe on the floor an arc of about seven feet. The table now told D. to get off the bed on which she was sitting.

Next followed a levitation of Violet, this time of fully one foot, I could tell, because at every sound I put out my arm to catch her in case she fell. Then the stool began scraping heavily again and whirled round and round until Violet called that she was getting dizzy, and finally landed with her against the bed.

There was still one more astonishing performance in store.

We had moved the stool away from the bed before Violet sat on it again. This time, after a preliminary scraping, the stool creaked, and a heavy body landed on the bed, and merry screams came from Violet. The spirits had lifted her and the stool a distance of fully eighteen inches, and thrown her so that she had fallen comfortably and lengthwise. Violet weighed one hundred and twenty pounds.

Naturally we were interested in knowing how many spirits had been required to do this. The table signified that it would inform us, and began to count. It had tipped off one hundred when I asked if several hundred had been required to do the work. The answer was, "Yes. Five hundred." This Louise later confirmed.

The table now signified that the trance was about to begin, and Violet announced that the room was full of animals, particularly dogs and cats. She said a big, brown, striped cat was sitting on my lap. This the spirits identified as a pet of my childhood, by name, "Tom," who at the ripe age of ten was poisoned by a neighbor, and whose demise was a tragedy of my boyhood; for I was not permitted to have a dog, and Tom took the place of such, and used to follow me about like one.

Then she spoke of a kitten lying in her own lap, and said a crab was "sitting" in front of the kitten. She described this kitten as being gray, with a white collar, white paws, and a white-tipped tail.

When Louise came a moment later, she told us to ask Violet to "place" the kitten.

So, after the séance, D. said to the child, "Did you ever have a kitten you were particularly fond of?"

"Yes," replied Violet. "It was such a pretty kitten. It was gray. There was a strip of white around its neck, and its paws were white and so was the tip of its tail. It used to walk sideways in a funny way, and Grandfather said it was like a crab. So we named it 'Crabby.' "

When Louise told us that five hundred spirits had assisted in the experiments we had just seen, we asked how it was possible for so many to take part, for it did not seem reasonable that the little stool on which Violet was seated could be the center of five hundred distinct efforts. She said, "I can only explain it by saying, 'fourth dimension.' Of course, you would not understand that. If Violet weighed only seventy-five pounds we could easily have lifted her to the ceiling."

Morton was the next visitor, and we asked him

whether D. and I would be able to do anything with the communication board and the table after Violet left. He said that we could use the communication board and that we could tip the table, but that we must not be disappointed if we had no results with the latter at once.

"You may have to sit for a hour at a time in order to get the necessary power concentrated," he said. "And it is possible that you will have to sit this long as many as three nights before you get any results whatever. But it can be done."

John came next and he asserted that Violet had been lifted about six inches at the first levitation and in the second up to the level of the bed. In answer to questions, John said, "Education and mentality in your world continue in the next, and the man who is educated while on earth has a great advantage in this plane." John also said, concerning Violet, that she had to live on the earth plane and must lead a human life; therefore, her unusual power must be taken away, lest she fall into the hands of exploiters.

Next came Cecilia, who wanted to know if we wished to ask her any questions. She had a different handclasp from any that we had yet felt.

Agatha came for a short time, and then Catherine for her first visit. She said she had never "come through" this way before. Her handclasp was quite different from Cecilia's and very formal.

Next came Louise, to wind up the evening meeting, as it were. It happened that my glasses fell on the floor and I could not find them in the darkness. She stooped over and picked them up and handed them to me; which bore out her claim that she could see as well in the dark as in bright light.

THE GUESTS TAKE LEAVE

CHAPTER XXII

THE GUESTS TAKE LEAVE

WE had no idea that our séances were to come to an end on Labor Day, for the program agreed upon was that there was to be the usual session this evening in the Camp, and a "finale" in the apartment in town the next evening when our friends were to "come through" and say "Good-by."

But Violet was to leave for the West on Wednesday, and during the early evening we had talked things over, and D. and I had agreed, out of the hearing of Violet, that we ought to give the child some entertainment in New York the night before she was to leave us. She had become very fond of us and seemed very loath to go away, although it meant reunion with her grandparents. We decided that she really ought to see the Hippodrome, or something like that, and have the opportunity at least of brightening up a little before her long journey.

The first thing that happened after we put out the light and raised the window curtain was that the little table turned a succession of somersaults. Then Isabel and her seat were moved about over the floor as on the night before, and the stool was pulled from under her. Next she and her stool were whirled about on the floor. Then the stool was taken from under her, and as she stood up to recover her balance, it was put down over her head. Next, the stool was taken from

under Violet and placed on the head of D., who sat on the bed. Then Violet and her seat were rocked about around the room, pushed toward the bed. the child and the stool were raised in the air, and, as she jumped, the stool landed upon my knee. Violet had hardly resumed her seat when the two were raised again, and the stool thrown over my head. This argued a levitation of at least two feet and a half. Several times the child was lifted fully this high.

In order to measure the next levitation, I kept my hand on Violet. She was lifted in the air until her head was within two inches of the rafters. This insured a levitation of at least three feet from the floor.

We had become fearful lest Violet suffer some harm, for it was very easy to fall off the stool, which as I said before was of wicker, and the levitation was called off.

The promise had been given us that her power would be taken away from her before she left, and the beginning of the process was something that at first frightened us, for it took the form of a severe muscular cramp. However, we were assured that it would not be harmful. Louise, who was the first to come, confirmed our belief that the child's power was in process of being withdrawn, but insisted that this would not be injurious, and added that it was better for her full protection that this should be done.

Then came Violet's father, Morton.

"I came to-night to say good-by!" he said. "We had intended waiting until to-morrow night, but we heard you talking before the séance and have agreed that it was best, as long as you wish it, that the end come to-night. As we leave to-night, her power will disappear. As a matter of fact, using the communica-

tion board really requires more of the substance that we employ than we require in levitation. I heard you estimate how high up we lifted Violet, and you were correct. If we had lifted her any higher, her head would have come into contact with the rafters. There were six hundred of us engaged in that particular operation. A spirit's lifting power, when it comes to earthly matter, is very small and it may take five or six of us to lift one pound unless conditions are exceptionally good. There were not enough of us last night to do what we wished and so we brought in reinforcements this evening. After to-night Violet will be able still to use the communication board and to tip table, but she will not be able to go into a trance."

Violet had been reading during the afternoon an article in which a fiction writer severely attacked Sir Oliver Lodge for statements the scientist had made with regard to his psychical investigations, and it left a great impression upon her. She had been eager for the book to be written, but now she argued that if I published it as I intended, I would be ridiculed and she could not bear to think that she would have been the innocent cause. Morton said he had read the paper over Violet's shoulder and he knew that certain critics were bound to say that Isabel had either hypnotized us into seeing and hearing things, or had artfully connived at our deception.

"You cannot make bull-headed men like the writer of that article believe that she did not know everything that was going on while she was in the trance and that she was not fooling you," he said. "Of course, such men will not believe what you say. They have never investigated psychical matters. They write

fiction to make money, and they won't believe that you have not made up a story of this summer's experiences of whole cloth or else that you were not mesmerized or hoodwinked. However, I suppose you are prepared for that. Well, there are lots waiting to say good-by," he said, "and I have had my turn. Good-by. Thank you for what you are doing for my little girl."

Agatha came next, and she clasped both D.'s and then my hands with both of hers and said, "Good-by." Then she said, "Good-by, my darling," and we could detect her petting Violet's body and patting her face. "Good-by, my darling, good-by," she said finally.

Next was John. "This is the end," he said after greeting us "Good-by." He shook hands with that strong, firm pressure that was characteristic.

Next came Cecilia, who said, "Good evening," and then, "Good-by"; and then followed in succession, Catherine and Dewdrop, and then Raindrop. The latter had become very much attached to D. and embraced her before finally saying "Good-by." Next came Sun Flower, who demanded, "Me Brave," and would not be satisfied until we assured her that her "Brave" was busy writing, but that we would give him her message. Then Muddy Water came for just a greeting and a "Good-by."

Next came Ed, one of our son's guides, making his first appearance in the body. Ed was rather boisterous, and stayed quite some time. He had the rarest accumulation of vocabulary of any spirit in our experience, for every time we would say something to him, he would answer with slang or colloquial expressions, with many of which neither D. nor Violet was at all familiar. For instance, he used "ding-

tootling," a mild swear word which I believe was current in New England the early part of the last century; "my vest is open, search me," and other rather modern expressions by which he seemed to set great store. He stayed longer than anybody else, and finally announced that, "He guessed he'd better not keep that gosh-darned bunch of waiters hanging around much longer."

Next came Paul, simply to shake hands; and then, for the first time, we heard a voice say, "This is Jeanne. Good-by." Her handclasp was as strong as a man's. Jeanne was one of Henriette's guides. Next came George, and then Albert, my two guides, with whom it was a case simply of "Good evening" and "Good-by." And then came Julius, who said it was the first time he had "come back" in the flesh, and that he had only come for the experience, and to say "good-by."

Next came Louise. "This is all, Daddy and Mummy," she said. "Good-by. I will be with you and I shall talk with you on the board, but this is the end of our summer."

It was as if she were going on a long journey. She assured us that Violet's power would depart soon after she herself left the child's body. We could not persuade her to linger, and shortly after she said good-by it became evident that the process of withdrawing Isabel's power was being completed, for she was again subjected to a severe muscular cramp. That alarmed us, but we had been informed that this process was necessary, if we were sincere in our desire that the child should be able to have a natural life, free from possibility of exploitation of her unusual power, and that the method of withdrawal of this would have absolutely no harmful results if we made no mistaken

move to render an assistance that we could not give. The only noticeable physical consequence, it was said, would be that there would be a temporary loss in weight. And, to our great relief, the process proved brief, and soon Violet was with us again, as natural as ever, and listening with intense interest to what had happened during her period of unconsciousness.

It so happened that that day the child had been weighed, and tipped the scales at 120 pounds. The next day she was found to weigh just 114 pounds.

We had now come to the end of our unusual summer.

For days we felt a sort of emptiness in our life. After Violet left us for the West, we abandoned the board and the table, for we knew that D. and I could not get any results with them. Besides, our "circle" was broken, and nobody outside the family, we felt, could get us the same intimate, convincing reality which Violet, through the ties of blood, but without intention on her part, had been instrumental in achieving.

But we could not be indifferent, and one night—it was September 12, the evening before Louise's birthday, and we were very blue because the proximity of what had once been a festivity awakened thoughts of other days and the plans she and we had made for her future, and we had some one with us I knew had some slight power—I suggested we get out the little table that still bore the name of Louise, written by her spirit hand.

We were soon made to feel that Louise had not left us, for we had messages that while very simple, were evidential. However, she said, she was alone. Morton had gone West with Violet, and John and the

others had departed. There was no "cloud of witnesses around," and so far as phenomena are concerned, the result might have been considered a sort of anti-climax. But we were satisfied to be assured that our daughter was still with us, and we have since had frequent assurance on the board. We know that while these further conversations with her may not be of interest outside our immediate circle of friends, we shall feel her presence. And the hope that "springs eternal" makes us feel in our hearts that some day she will come again in all the reality she established, as I have recorded; that we may not be required to wait until we are called beyond to hear her voice again; and more.

But, "we have heard what we have heard and seen what we have seen," and only what we have heard and seen have I written.

September 28, 1919.

AFTERTHOUGHT

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IT seems to have become the fashion, particularly in England, for an author who is unknown to the public to induce a friend with a literary reputation to write an introduction to a new book, and a suggestion was made that this little volume might attract more consideration and perhaps gain a larger measure of credence if it bore a prefatory note by some one well known in the field of psychical research; incidentally, such a note might also serve, in some degree, to deflect or divide unfavorable criticism.

But this is not a scientific work; no scientist or accredited psychical investigator was concerned in its production, and it pretends to be nothing more ambitious than a simple narrative of certain occurrences, many of them beyond the common run of experience. It conveys a message which was given the writer from sources which he is firmly convinced were extra-human, or what some psychical investigators call "super-normal," and which he was instructed to transmit. That message has brought unlooked-for comfort to one bereaved family; it may help others who sorrow.

Since it was transcribed, the writer has become more familiar with psychical literature than he was. More than two months after the book's completion, having found no recent publication in which the circumstances attendant upon the processes of communi-

cation described seemed so remarkable or even so unusual, he wrote to a scientist who is generally recognized as one of the foremost of psychical investigators, giving a brief resumé of his experience. Under date of December 24, 1919, a reply came, in which, among other things, the scientist said that the matter obtained "should certainly be put on record somehow," and suggested that full reports be furnished the Society for Psychical Research in London and the American Society for Psychical Research.

"You will realize," the letter continued, "that a considerable number of bereaved people have had experiences not very different from your own, though apparently the physical concomitants in your case were more striking than usual. . . . The power, however, is often sporadic and need not necessarily continue. And, so far as it interferes with the health and well-being of the child, it is undesirable that it should. It is very satisfactory, however, that your wife has been able to receive comfort in this way. You say quite rightly that love is the link and the motive power in such things, and having achieved its object it (the motive power) may either cease or become very occasional."

But while an introduction by a psychical authority is lacking, the writer of this book realizes that some persons may resent his presumption in telling of things that are not only without the experience of the great majority of people, but are contrary to their ideas of what is possible, and that others, however charitably disposed they may be, will decline to accept the word of an individual of whom they have never heard. There is much reason in both attitudes.

Nobody—not even the most ardent Shavian—en-

joys being called a liar, though that is the average man's first impulse when a stranger tells him something he does not believe. One self-styled "polar discoverer" heard the epithet at once. But another's statement that he had located the North Pole was bolstered up by his past reputation for veracity before it was confirmed by scientific calculations. So far as one knows, survival after death cannot be proven by mathematics or astronomy, but the writer has yielded to suggestion that in lieu of credentials he should establish, if possible, that by men under or with whom he has worked or been associated in one way or another, and who are known to a much wider circle than he, he has hitherto been considered a sane and truthful person; and that is his excuse for presenting the extracts from letters given below.

It will be found that some of the writers of these letters are willing to think that the author of this little book is still fairly sane, and that while such may not subscribe to the possibility of spirit communication, they intimate a readiness to believe that the incidents narrated occurred just as they have been set down.

CHESTER S. LORD, for many years Managing Editor, New York *Sun*: I am glad to know that you are to say something in print. I know it will be interesting and trustworthy and valuable, for these are qualities that enter into your productions and utterances of all sorts. Sept. 2, 1919.

JOHN HAYS HAMMOND: From my acquaintance with you, and the high opinion I have of your credibility and reliability, I certainly would give credence to any statement of fact that you would make. Aug. 21, 1919.

BOOTH TARKINGTON: I know I shall be very much interested in reading a book upon psychical phenomena by you. I have known you for over ten years, I think, and I believe anything that you tell me; also I cannot imagine you deceiving yourself (or being deceived successfully for any length of time, by other people.) You have been too good a newspaper man to be credulous or

gullible. What you have written will carry great weight with me, and ought to carry great weight with your readers. Sept. 6, 1919.

CHARLES M. LINCOLN, Managing Editor, *New York World*: I have not the slightest objection to stating that I have known you for twenty years and that during that period I have always found you thoroughly reliable. Aug. 21, 1919.

GEORGE B. MALLON, formerly City Editor, *New York Sun*: I have known you now for some twelve or fourteen years. . . . I would certainly read with interest anything you might write for I know it would be based on your honest investigations. Aug. 21, 1919.

ADOLPH S. OCHS, Publisher, *The New York Times*: Mr. Albert S. Crockett was for some time connected with the staff of the *New York Times*. His work was most satisfactory. He is a journalist of wide experience and unusual ability; a cultured and estimable gentleman. August 18, 1920.

JOHN MCE. BOWMAN: I have known Mr. Albert S. Crockett for more than fifteen years. During the last three years he has been associated with me in a confidential capacity, having been, during the War, my Executive Assistant in the Hotel, Restaurant, Dining Car and Steamship Division of the United States Food Administration. My confidence in Mr. Crockett's sincerity is such that I am perfectly willing to accept without reservation any report he may make upon an occurrence of any kind.

ROBERT E. MACALARNEY, Associate in Journalism, Columbia University: I have read the manuscript of the book twice very carefully. I am returning it to you genuinely impressed and with the hope that it will be printed.

As you know my knowledge of the origin of the book is exact. I recall distinctly how these experiences began and why. I remember also that not once when you discussed them with me were you swept away by any feeling that I could diagnose as even undue interest. In all of your descriptions of what occurred you were the sane and questioning reporter, using the news sense which I personally happen to know you have used so successfully in the field of journalism.

Let me tell you that I have the utmost belief in you as a truthful narrator. If you say that these things happened in the way they happened, I believe they happened in just that way. And what I like about the way you have told your experiences is that there is no flavor of wishing to convince the reader. You have merely recited experiences in which you have taken part. They are told with repression and with simple directness. Feb. 19, 1920.

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